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Can Industry Pay More?

THE C. I. O. has opened its new wage drive by publishing a report showing that real wages have fallen sharply in the past two years, while corporate profits have tremendously expanded. Prepared by Robert N. Nathan, the well-known economist and former deputy director of reconversion, the report seeks to prove that, with the present trend of industrial profits, "a substantial wage increase is possible, justifiable, and essential"; in fact it concludes, "without that, or a sharp drop in prices, we are flirting with collapse."

As was only to be expected, Mr. Nathan's arguments are being hotly attacked by the spokesmen of business who continue to insist that a new round of wage increases will inevitably be reflected in prices, and give another boost to the inflationary spiral. That, however, is not necessarily so. Now that OPA is abolished, prices in many instances are being determined not by any fixed relation to costs, but on the principle of "what the traffic will bear." Corporations faced with higher labor costs will pass these costs on, if they think the customers will stand for it; if not, they will trim margins and, as the Nathan report indicates, many of them have margins which can stand some trimming without reducing their shareholders to poverty. Suppose, for instance, that all corporations reduced their average rate of return on sales to the average of 1936-39; their net earnings would then be running at an annual rate of $8,250,000,000 instead of $15,000,000,000.

It is, of course, true, as the New York *Times* has hastened to point out, that the profits of industry as a whole are not a pool which can be drawn from to pay higher wages in any branch. One cannot, for example, lift the earnings of steel-workers on the basis of the inordinate profits of the liquor companies. But that point is fully recognized by the unions. Philip Murray, when introducing the Nathan report, was careful to say that the conditions it described did not necessarily apply to every collective bargaining situation and that it would be adopted by C. I. O. unions only as a "guide-post."

Actually, while some industries encountered heavy weather in the first half of this year, there are now few which are not sharing the general prosperity. Steel, automobiles, and electrical-equipment manufacturers are often mentioned as particular sufferers from the squeeze between labor costs and prices, but all three seem to be convalescing rapidly. The steel companies reported very fair profits for the third quarter of this year, while the other two groups appear to have hit their stride in the last three months. Most leading concerns in the "depressed" categories, it is interesting to note, have continued to pay substantial dividends, even though these were not earned—good evidence that their directors regard their troubles as transitory.

But the opponents of increased wages are not so anxious to question the accuracy of Mr. Nathan's figures and forecasts as to argue that they are irrelevant. They are no more inclined than were the General Motors' managers, a year ago, to discuss the level of profits or ability to pay. The orthodoxy of the present hour is that wages can only safely be raised *pari passu* with increased production. One weak point in the argument is its failure to recognize the fact that labor productivity is not just a matter of increased effort or skill. In a mass-production industry, full labor efficiency can only be obtained when output is at or near capacity. That condition has not been achieved in many plants since the war, partly because of strikes, partly because of shortages for which labor is not responsible. But we are told that these difficulties are being overcome, and that if the workers will only refrain from strikes, it will be possible to reach a sustained flow of production. But will it? That condition implies a sustained flow of orders, and at present wage and price levels the only group in the country which can provide such a flow, the wage and salary earners, is being excluded from the market by lack of purchasing power.

It may be said that, if the workers are patient, this situation will be corrected by the lowering of prices as production rises and costs fall. But this argument presumes the operation of an intelligent self-interest on the part of business men which, experience warns us, we cannot count upon. In practice, we know that business always waits too long to cut prices; waits until depression has arrived and demand has evaporated, even at a lower price level. There is very little hope, in fact, that the price-reduction method of holding on to prosperity, even though it is supported by conservative economists, will

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voluntarily be followed by business. That leaves wage increases as the only practical method of getting a better balance between the rewards of labor and capital.

We hope this objective can be achieved without a new round of strikes. So, clearly, do the leaders of the C. I. O. who are fully aware of the dangers involved in long stoppages. They will, we are certain, be prepared to accept reasonable compromises and if employers, refraining from the temptation to exploit the Republican victory, will do likewise, there is no need to anticipate another winter of labor warfare.

The Laski Libel Case

NATION readers do not need to be convinced that Harold Laski has never advocated revolution by violence as a method of social change. But he was accused of just that by several journals in England in the course of the election campaign in 1945, and he brought suit against one of them, the *Newark Advertiser and South Notts Gazette*, to put a stop to libelous charges which might easily have damaged Labor's chance. The other day he lost his case, and the full account of the trial, now available in the London papers, provides an instructive example of British justice tempered by British reaction. Ten witnesses swore they had attended the meeting at which Mr. Laski was reported as having advocated violence and revolution without hearing any such statement made; four said they believed the report was substantially correct. Mr. Laski himself testified that he had merely said, in response to a heckler —who was, incidentally, the press agent of the Conservative candidate in that district—that with the end of the war, if reforms were not brought about by constitutional means, there was danger of a drift toward violence and revolution.

But the final verdict probably resulted less from the evidence than from the provocative tactics used by Sir Patrick Hastings, the noted barrister, formerly a Labor Party member himself, who represented the defendant. His cross-examination was clearly designed to expose the plaintiff to ridicule and contempt, and his address to the jury cleverly blurred the distinction between advocacy of revolution and a prediction that revolution might occur. In the end, the jury was undoubtedly left with the impression that Laski was at best a rather dangerous sort of fellow who might easily have used the words quoted in the Newark weekly. A friend in England has sent us this comment on the verdict:

> The jury played hell with Harold Laski's case. Hastings did not misunderstand them. He gave them a few simple stimuli to vulgar prejudice, and they reacted accordingly. I guess Freud shows the limitations of all

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jury trials in which a demagogue is allowed to play on the subconscious while the judge stays upstairs with the law.

The action had to be brought, in the opinion of Mr. Laski and his friends, in order to stop the unprincipled attempt of the extreme right to discredit the Labor Party in the midst of the campaign by smearing its leaders with the revolutionary label. Now that the case has been lost, we are glad to see that the Labor Party and the trade unions are asking for contributions from members to meet the exorbitant and obviously punitive costs charged against Mr. Laski—costs that will amount to something like $60,000. It is unthinkable that he should be allowed to shoulder any part of this outrageous burden.

Germany Next

THE Moscow session of the Council of Foreign Ministers will at last bring the Big Four face to face with the gravest and most complex problem of all, that of Germany. While we do not underrate the importance of the agreements that have been reached to date, it is clear that the treaties with Italy and the Balkan Axis satellites will lose all meaning if we fail to solve the German question. A breakdown over Germany would mean a division of Europe into two blocs, each having its own mode of life and oriented towards powerful and hostile states. In such a situation, the agreement about the Danube would be meaningless and the long discussions of frontiers and constitutions utterly futile.

The comparative ease with which the Foreign Ministers have reached agreements within the last few weeks gives ground for a balanced optimism. Positions have been taken, and bargaining points have been made, in readiness for the Moscow session. Yet there are unmistakable signs that the Big Three are ready to yield on matters that, in the earlier stages of negotiations, seemed beyond the reach of compromise.

It is not the question of frontiers that will endanger success at Moscow, but the necessity of evolving a plan for the structure of German society, upon which depends the whole future of Europe. Here, again, steps have been taken that at first sight seem irreversible. Russia has largely socialized the economy of eastern Germany, and has incorporated it into its own system of exchange. London and Washington, no doubt, had the forthcoming session of the Council in mind in signing the recent merger agreement by which the industry of their zone, cut off at present from eastern and western European sources and outlets, may find markets in the Western world. That these measures are drastic must be admitted. The orientation of eastern Germany's economy toward Russia tends to freeze existing economic and political divisions, condemning western Germany to an artificial and poverty-stricken existence. The merger of the British and American zones may have a similar effect, although in the short time before the Moscow conference the situation cannot be greatly changed. It is a known fact, however, that American policy has been strongly influenced by those who wish to abandon denazification and decartelization. The champions of free enterprise are energetic and powerful and they see in the Russian program an excellent justification for establishing the merger on a firmly conservative basis. This intention can be frustrated only by a determined effort on the part of the British government, backed by democratic elements in Germany, to socialize the basic industries of the western zones in spite of American opposition or indifference. Any sign of Russian willingness to compromise and so assist the unification of German economy, would also help cut the ground from under the feet of the conservatives, both in England and America.

This, then, is the problem which the Foreign Ministers must consider during the Moscow meeting. The dangers to which they will be exposed are different in each case. The Soviet leaders must be prepared to give up their doctrinal rigidity and take a more sober view of the problem of their security. The British must throw off the burden of fear concerning their empire, and must be bold in following the implications of their tentative and timidly executed plans for German industry. For both Russia and Britain, this will be difficult. America, lately emerged from isolation, needs even greater courage and imagination. Private enterprise is a dying system in Europe and if we attempt to revive it we shall, in the long run, invite catastrophe.

The Shape of Things

DESPITE FIORELLO LA GUARDIA'S GOOD fight, the State Department has succeeded not only in blocking a new U. N. relief agency, but in injecting politics into the disposal of the remainder of UNRRA's funds. Of course, the American representatives in U. N. and UNRRA councils have flatly denied that the United States has been motivated by political considerations in seeking to change the existing relief pattern. They have insisted that their desire to give additional aid to Italy, Austria, and Greece, and less to Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, is based solely on the greater need of the former countries. There is at least a grain of truth in this contention. The food situation in Austria is extremely grave, as our recent article by G. E. R. Gedye clearly showed, and it is not much better in Italy. But reports from Poland, White Russia, and the Ukraine indicate that any diversion of the food which has been promised these areas would lead to acute mal-

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nutrition. If, as a result of American pressure, the existing commitments to these countries are repudiated, it is going to be very difficult for the United States to persuade the world that it is not utilizing food for political purposes. Senator Wherry is somewhat more honest, if less concerned for our reputation as a Good Samaritan, in declaring that the "cause of democracy is being lost" in Europe because "the United States is not getting credit" for the relief distributed by UNRRA. Significantly enough, neither the State Department nor Mr. Wherry has complained about the use of UNRRA supplies without credit where they were used, as in Greece and China, to buttress reactionary governments.

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VICTORY ON THE SPANISH ISSUE CAME AFTER one of the most heated and interesting debates that has yet taken place in the United Nations. Perhaps the most important lesson of the fight has been to show that the big powers can be defeated when the cause for which they stand is an indefensible one. The American resolution was voted down—despite the fact that many countries were originally inclined to go along with Washington—because it tried to put across a proposal that would have meant a negotiated settlement with Franco and other reactionary elements in Spain. On the positive side, the adoption of the Belgian resolution by an impressive 32-to-6 vote is the first clear admission that Spain is the business of the United Nations. Until last week, the entire argument in the Security Council and the General Assembly had revolved around the single question of whether or not the United Nations were empowered to take any action against Franco, beyond that of barring him from membership. Now, the Belgian resolution places the Spanish issue squarely within the jurisdiction of the international organization, disposing, once and for all, of the nonsensical belief that action by the U. N. would constitute intervention in the internal affairs of a sovereign country. We have no assurance that the British and Americans will abandon their efforts to replace Franco's hated regime by a clerical-military government. But last Thursday's vote will make such a maneuver much more difficult.

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THE CHOICE OF NEW YORK AS THE SITE FOR the permanent home of the United Nations was made by punch-drunk delegates wearied by a two-months' bout of unremitting debate, exasperated by the frustrations of commuting, rendered claustrophobic by their rabbit-like existence in the dark warrens of the Sperry plant at Lake Success. The promise of a skyscraper City of Peace made by the builder and creator of the magic Radio City seemed like an apocalyptic vision at the end of a nightmare. Not even the eminently rational choice of the parklands of Philadelphia, which the site committee had settled on, could stand up against John D.'s dramatic munificence. The whole matter was signed and sealed with a speed more reminiscent of a Florida boom than the serious counsels of responsible men. It may be all right. New York *is* the world's capital in more than a peaceful sense. Intelligent planners and good architects can do something useful with those seventeen acres in midtown Manhattan. And *Nation* editors can reach the U. N. at the third subway stop. But we have certain qualms. The baby U. N. will find it has not much room to grow. Then there is the question of housing. The members of the permanent U. N. staff who found the commuting from New York to Great Neck irksome are going to discover that commuting from Great Neck to Forty-second Street is just as tiresome—that is, if they are lucky enough to find homes in Great Neck. We wish the United Nations luck on their new site, but we can't help feeling that when they begin to work out the details they may find they have married Mr. Rockefeller's millions in unseemly haste.

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LAST JUNE, THE SENATE VOTED 49 TO 16 TO reform itself in several ways and, in particular, to renovate its barnacled and incoherent committee system. Leading Republicans, among them Senator Taft, supported the measure. Unimpeachable in itself, the theoretical case for it was made irresistibly attractive by provisions for a 25 per cent salary increase and pensions for retired legislators. And, finally, the act promised a monumental headache to the majority party, which would have to divide fifteen chairmanships among thirty-three ex-chairmen. What the Republican Senators failed to figure on, last June, was that they themselves would constitute the majority only six months later. Faced with an outburst of intra-party jealousies and a factional struggle for power, they now find their ardor for the Reorganization Act rapidly congealing. Senator Taft complains that the Republican Committee on Committees has been "practically put in a straitjacket" by the plan, and his remarks have been widely echoed. The revolt has gone even farther in the House, which originally passed the act by a vote of 229 to 61. Six members are hard at work, canvassing Republicans of the lower chamber, to force an amendment whereby the Naval Affairs Committee and the Military Affairs Committee will continue to go their separate ways. We hardly believe that the Republican leadership will be brash enough to scrap the act outright, especially since the House Steering Committee, less than a month ago, voted overwhelmingly to give it a try. But if an exception is made for the military and naval committees, the act may as well be filed in the nearest wastebasket. Once this "bulge in the line" is established, it will be only a matter of time before the whole plan collapses, except the pensions and the salary boost—both of which, we can report, are being accepted with remarkable party discipline and good spirit.

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THESE RUMBLINGS OF DISCONTENT, AND A rather raw effort being made to rig committees by increasing the Republican majority, tell something of the conflicting currents in the G. O. P. The seniority rule is under fire from the Senate's Westerners, who added appreciably to their ranks in November but who will have only a small voice in policy-making unless geography is introduced as a determining factor. As Senator Robertson of Wyoming points out, "No Senator from west of the Dakotas will get a chairmanship under the seniority rule." To make more posts available, and to reduce a dangerous concentration of power, the Westerners and other rebels are out to prevent dual job-holding. Specifically, they hope to stop three men from holding down six top posts: Taft, who heads the unofficial but powerful G. O. P. Steering Committee; Wallace White, slated to be floor leader; and Vandenberg, who is certain to be elected president of the Senate. All three have their eyes on crucial committee chairmanships as well. There will be a fight to break up this concentration of control—and another, we hope, over the attempt to swell the Republican majority on four key committees. The count, in the Senate as a whole, is 51 to 45 for the Republicans. It is fair enough, therefore, for the Republicans to have a 7-to-6 majority on thirteen-man committees. The fact that they are asking for an 8-to-5 ratio is an indication that they are not certain of their own solidarity. We suspect they are afraid that on the Labor Committee, for example, Senators Morse and Aiken might on occasion vote with the Democrats—which, if a single vote were decisive, would probably give a dangerous impression of party weakness and spoil a lot of fun.

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THE RESIGNATION OF WILSON WYATT AS National Housing Administrator has meant the death of the veterans' housing program. A Washington letter by Bryant Putney on page 722 describes the triumph of as slick a lobby of selfish interests as the country has ever seen. The only meager consolation in the whole shameful business is that it has awakened a public which has been somnolent too long, and focussed that public's attention on the nation's number one social and economic problem. Unfortunately, even those most concerned about the problem are apt to think in terms of a "post-war emergency." Too few will accept the fact that the plight of veterans who deserve better from their country simply dramatizes a dismal situation which millions of Americans have been putting up with, year in and year out, war or no war. The responsibility of the government is conveniently stated in terms of the post-war emergency, but the roots of the housing scandal run deep into the economics of an archaic building industry, into the callous disregard of an acquisitive society, into an abyss of public ignorance, into a bankruptcy of public policy. For these reasons, *The Nation* has asked Charles Abrams, one of the country's outstanding housing experts, to write a series of articles, the first of which appears on page 723, exposing and explaining the basic causes of America's failure to provide homes.

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OF COURSE, WE SHALL BE DELIGHTED IF AND when Theodore Bilbo is booted out of the Senate. But the question of his departure seems to us far less important than the process employed to get rid of him. It begins to appear now that, if he is ousted at all, it will be for a war record of outstanding shadiness. Bilbo would then return to Mississippi merely as a crook, utterly without significance. We had a grander role blocked out for him. We saw him as an historic, if unsavory, figure: the first Senator to be barred for campaigning on a platform of intimidation and anti-democratic incitement. It now appears that this hoped-for precedent will not be set, thanks to the audacious whitewashing job performed by Senator Ellender. The hearings he conducted in Mississippi were useless, since he was determined from the start to excuse Bilbo. More important, the hearings were needless. It did not have to be proved that Bilbo's inflammatory speeches kept a single Negro away from the polls; much less that he would have lost the election without such intimidation. When the Senate barred Boss Vare, some years ago, it did not first require proof that his slush fund had purchased certain specified votes, or that the results would have been different without his money. It was held sufficient to show that his actions had "tainted the seat with fraud." Bilbo was widely reported to have called repeatedly "on every red-blooded white man to use any means to keep the niggers away from the polls." All that was needed was to verify the quotation. That alone should have "tainted the seat"—and cleared the air.

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BREAKDOWN OF THE LONDON CONFERENCE on India, following the withdrawal of the Moslem League from the Constituent Assembly, has produced a new crisis of extraordinary complexity. Farsighted patience and tact will be required for its solution; and one can understand the British government's reluctance to yield to the demand for a Commons debate. In the light of his long record of obstruction, Mr. Churchill's object was clearly to hinder the achievement of Indian liberty. The event has justified the government's fears, for in a speech shot through with malice the former Prime Minister did his utmost to sharpen the conflict in India. By charging Sir Stafford Cripps with angling his plan to favor Hindu domination of the Moslem minority, and by calculated prophecy of civil strife, Mr. Churchill has incited Mr. Jinnah to continue the obstructive tactics he has so tragically employed in recent months. That the government's reply would be more than cautious was to be expected. British Labor is

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irrevocably committed to the course it has taken. Fearing renewed bloodshed in India, it cannot boldly challenge Mr. Jinnah by declaring that it will unreservedly accept whatever proposal the one-party constituent Assembly may make. Yet its failure to do so must necessarily weaken Mr. Nehru and undermine his prestige with both right and left opposition. The only available recourse would seem to be to persuade Nehru to make further concessions. And since the Congress Party will never consent to a divided India, the only hope would seem to lie in adoption of the federal idea. No one knows how far the Congress Party will be willing to go in this direction, or whether Jinnah, who would prefer British rule to a free and united India, will accept anything less than an extreme interpretation of Pakistan. The answer to these questions will be given in Delhi, not London.

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THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC SEEMS TO BE IN danger of turning back to the days of the infamous Padlock Law of the thirties. Those most persistent and humorless proselytizers, the Jehovah's Witnesses, have recently been distributing, on the streets of Montreal, an anti-Catholic pamphlet entitled "The Burning Hatred of Quebec." When a dozen or more Witnesses were arrested, bail was provided for some of them by Frank Roncarelli, a well-known restaurant owner. In a sprightly retaliatory spirit, Maurice Duplessis, in his dual role as Premier of the province and Attorney-General, ordered the revocation of Roncarelli's liquor license. M. Duplessis, the Premier, attempts to justify his action by the quaint argument that to permit Roncarelli to aid the Jehovah's Witnesses with funds derived from the sale of liquor would make M. Duplessis, the Attorney-General, an accomplice. Religious dissenters are not the only objects of Duplessis's campaign. On December 10, Captain Jack Ennis's anti-subversive police detail made simultaneous raids on the headquarters of the English, French, and Jewish branches of the Labor Progressive Party (the present vehicle of the Communist Party), and also raided the home of Michael Buhay, a city councillor. The purpose of the raids, so it has been announced, is to prevent the distribution of a pamphlet entitled "Defend Fred Rose." If the trend of recent Quebec history is not altered, M. Duplessis is likely, once again, to invoke the Padlock Law.

Bilbo on the Griddle

BY TRIS COFFIN

Washington, December 13

THE luck of Senator Theodore G. Bilbo is beginning to play out. This little sawed-off man, with his sunken cheeks, his watery eyes which squint through metal-rimmed spectacles, has now became a political issue.

Republican Senators from industrial states feel that they are committed to throwing "the Man" out of the old chamber in the northern wing of the Capitol. Arthur Vandenberg has told reporters that Bilbo's ouster is high on the priority list.

Many Northern Democrats consider the Mississippi Senator a dangerous political liability, who might cost their party many seats and the Presidency in 1948. The Southerners, who are usually quick to defend the honor of their Dixie kin, are showing no haste or enthusiasm to support the cause of Theodore Bilbo.

The determination of many Senators on both sides of the aisle to cross out Bilbo is indicated by the fact that within two weeks two separate Senate committees have investigated his fitness to hold office.

The more sectionally sympathetic group was the Special Committee to Investigate Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, headed by Louisiana's Allen Ellender. Its members do not show great crusading zeal. The ranking Republican, Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, apparently regards Ellender's obvious efforts not to blacken Bilbo or the South as part of a political tug-of-war in which he, Bridges, is involved only on the side.

The Subcommittee of the War Investigating Committee shows more spirit. Chairman James Mead, who was defeated for Governor of New York, has told friends that his final act on Capitol Hill will be to make a strong case against Bilbo on charges that the Mississippi Senator profited personally from war contracts. Senator Mead feels personally committed to using all his talents as an investigator in this case. Other Democrats, on the War Investigating Committee itself, are supporting him. Harley Kilgore of West Virginia, who succeeded to the chairmanship, has given his blessing and support to the Bilbo hearings.

Some Democrats see Bilbo building into an issue that could be of crucial importance in the 1948 elections. He has become a symbol to civil-liberties and Negro groups. Negro voters, after deserting the party of Abraham Lincoln in 1932, have now begun to drift back to the Republicans. The Democrats cannot win without them in 1948, and the G. O. P. must try to prevent their defection. Five Negro correspondents are covering the Mead committee hearings, and representatives of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People are in the audience.

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Some of the more cynical Washington politicians have decided it would be easier to send Bilbo back to Mississippi than to pass the FEPC or the anti-poll-tax bill. Bilbo is only another Senator, while these bills lead to a fundamental change in the condition of Southern life.

The war-profits hearing began on a gray and warm morning this week. Bilbo ambled into the glittering Senate caucus room with his irregular, bow-legged gait. Wall Doxey, the handsome and distinguished-looking Senate sergeant-at-arms, rushed up to Bilbo, and with much bowing and scraping led him past the press table. Doxey is a former Senator from Mississippi himself and was allied with Bilbo. Noting the curious stares of the reporters Doxey drawled happily to Bilbo, "They all got to look at you." Soon after Bilbo sat down at a place usually reserved for committee officials, Jim Mead strolled in, smiling to old friends. Noticing Bilbo, he said jocularly, "Hi, Theodore, how's your good health?" There was no note of deep concern in his voice.

Homer Ferguson, the white-haired Republican from Michigan, came next into the chamber. Photographers, looking for a picture, shouted to Ferguson and Bilbo, "Come on, shake hands there!" Ferguson kept his hand flat on the table as if he had not heard. Bilbo inched his hand forward a little, then let it rest.

Senator Mead gave the charter and purpose of the hearing in his opening statement: "The allegations will be treated in the same manner as in any other case. There has been a preliminary investigation by the staff. The committee voted unanimously to investigate. This subcommittee has an open mind, without prejudice, although the full committee does believe there is a *prima facie* case."

The Senator's voice rose strongly as he said, "All men are equal before the law, in a democracy." He did not look at Bilbo as he said this. The Mississippi Senator was calmly smoking a long, black cigar. His feet were on the table before him.

Bilbo's young attorney asked if he would have the privilege of cross-examining witnesses. Senator Mead answered a polite but firm "No." He explained, "You will be given a full chance to state your case. But we will not transfer to anyone the authority of this committee to question witnesses. If you have any recommendations to the committee, you may put them in writing."

The hearing thus far has established several points: (1) Bilbo was a nuisance around the War Department when it came time to award war contracts in Mississippi. The army's attitude was summed up in a sentence taken from a telephone transcript: "Keep Senator Bilbo off our neck." (2) Many political associates of Bilbo participated in the Mississippi war contracts. (3) The contractors contributed generously to Bilbo and to political campaigns in which he was interested. Some $30,000 was paid directly to Bilbo. One unhappy witness, a pudgy, red-haired Mississippi contractor testified to writing checks amounting to $25,000 and putting them on a desk in Bilbo's office.

Most of the questioning is done by Senator Ferguson, who won his seat on his record as a prosecutor. His questioning is slow, deliberate, even painful in its exactness. Then, suddenly, he will strike hard, and by the mere inflection of his voice raise issues of integrity and honesty. Ferguson is trying to lay a sound basis for the accusations to be leveled directly at Bilbo within a few days. There has been some melodrama in the hearing—the case of Bilbo's missing secretary, who is said to fear assassination and kidnapping—but it is aside from the real story. The real story is that a combination of influential Republicans and Democrats have decided that Theodore Bilbo shall not sit in the Senate.

The Ellender committee will probably send a divided report to the Senate on alleged election misconduct. But the Kilgore committee, without the necessity of commenting on the delicate question of whether Negroes should vote or not, seems likely to send down a scathing indictment of Bilbo. Jim Mead wants to make this document the best he has worked on during his time on the investigating committee.

Caricature by Post

Theodore G. Bilbo

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United Nations' Balance Sheet

BY VERA MICHELES DEAN

Lake Success, December 14

AS DELEGATES to the U. N., weary from an uninterrupted round of day and night sessions, were packing up their bags for departure on the Queen Elizabeth in time to spend Christmas at home, the General Assembly in a burst of intense activity wound up the second part of its first session, which is destined to leave a deep imprint on the history of international organization. To an encouraging degree the debates of the General Assembly and its committees were free from the grandiloquent phrases about eternal peace which had done so much during the inter-war period to discredit the efforts of nations to create a system of collective security. There was little glamour about the proceedings at Lake Success or Flushing Meadows, and not much oratorical display. But there was something far more important for the future of the U. N.—and that was a genuine desire to work hard on issues of concern to all nations.

The record of accomplishment of the General Assembly in the more than seven weeks that it was in session is impressive, especially considering the amount of disagreement that existed at the start. Here is a brief list of the major decisions.

Trusteeship. On December 13 the General Assembly by a two-thirds' vote accepted eight agreements under which as many territories formerly under mandate from the League of Nations will be transferred to the trusteeship of the United Nations. This decision opened the way to the creation, on December 14, of the Trusteeship Council, the last of the major U. N. organs to be established. The trusteeship agreements covering New Guinea (mandated to Australia), Western Samoa (New Zealand), Ruanda-Urundi (Belgium), Tanganyika, British Cameroons, and British Togoland (Britain) were accepted by forty-one to six with six abstentions. The six negative votes were cast by Byelo-Russia, Liberia, Poland, the U. S. S. R., and Yugoslavia. On the two other agreements, covering the French Cameroons and French Togoland, Poland changed its vote from "no" to abstention. India, which had sided with Russia in opposing the trusteeship agreements in their present form during the committee discussions, abstained from voting in the General Assembly.

Important also was the decision of the General Assembly on December 14 to disapprove the proposal of the Union of South Africa for annexation of Southwest Africa, which it holds as a mandate from the League of Nations, and to ask that South Africa submit a U. N. trusteeship agreement for that territory. The resolution covering this matter had been prepared by the United States, Denmark, and India.

To the last Nikolai N. Novikov, Russian ambassador in Washington, contended that the trusteeship agreements should be rejected because they violated the U. N. Charter, and especially because the Trusteeship Committee had failed to agree on a definition of the phrase "states directly concerned." Under Article 86 of the Charter, Australia, Belgium, France, New Zealand, and Britain become members of the Trusteeship Council by virtue of the fact that they are named administering authorities under the trusteeship agreements; China, the United States, and Russia, as permanent members of the Security Council which do not hold trust territories, also become members of the Trusteeship Council ex officio; and two countries—Iraq and Mexico—have been elected to the Council for three-year terms. The first meeting of the new Trusteeship Council is scheduled to be held on March 15.

Relief and Refugees. In deference to the point of view of the United States, which after furnishing 72 per cent of the funds for the work of UNRRA, slated to end in Europe the first of the year, opposed the creation of a new international relief agency as proposed by LaGuardia, the General Assembly decided not to set up a new agency to complete the task of relief. Instead, it instructed the Secretary General to arrange for consultations among governments to ascertain existing needs and available supplies. In addition, a ten-nation technical committee was appointed to report on the food needs and foreign-exchange deficits of the countries of the world.

The final decision as to the allocation of food, however, will remain with the individual contributing countries, which, as urged by Washington, will conduct their relief negotiations bilaterally after informal consultations through the U. N. Secretariat. The Secretary General was also requested to prepare a report on a suggestion made by Dr. Aake Ording of Norway that the organized workers of the United Nations be invited to contribute "one day's work for one free world"—a contribution which, it is estimated, would amount to more than $100,000,000.

Russia and several of the countries of Eastern Europe and the Balkans which have been recipients of UNRRA relief vigorously opposed the decision of the Assembly. In accepting this decision Andrei A. Gromyko declared

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that "full responsibility" for its results "will fall squarely" on the countries supporting it.

In spite of persistent objections by Russia, Poland, and Yugoslavia the Assembly approved the charter of the International Refugee Organization (IRO), which is to handle the problem of the nearly one million displaced persons still in camps, chiefly in the American and British zones of Germany. As already pointed out in this series, Russia and several other countries of Eastern Europe and the Balkans contend that the D. P.'s, most of whom come from their territories, should be forced to return, and are unwilling to make any financial contribution to their resettlement in other lands; while the Western powers are unwilling to force repatriation on people who resist it on political or religious grounds and hold that the resettlement of these people outside Germany is a common responsibility of the United Nations. Probably on no other question before the Assembly was the gulf between East and West so profound—nor can it be said that this gulf has yet been bridged.

Reduction and Control of Armaments. The most far-reaching issue debated by the Assembly was the reduction and control of armaments, including the census of troops and weapons, at home and in foreign countries, both friends and ex-enemies. The tide of opinion flowed back and forth so rapidly during the closing sessions of the Assembly that at some moments, notably during the stormy night session of Tuesday, December 10, when Sir Hartley Shawcross appeared to be improvising a new British policy, few even among the experts were quite sure what was happening. On December 13, however, Byrnes, Bevin, and Molotov took pains to elucidate the position of their respective countries on the tangled skein of armaments problems. The net result of the extremely complex discussions, embodied in the disarmament resolution adopted by the Assembly on December 14 by acclamation, can be summed up as follows:

The Assembly recognizes the necessity of "an early general regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces." The Security Council is requested to expedite consideration of practical measures for reduction and regulation, and to submit the resulting plans to a special session of the General Assembly.

The prohibition of atomic and all other major weapons, including those that may be developed in the future, is listed as an urgent objective, and the Atomic Energy Commission is asked to expedite its work. The core of the resolution is that the international system of inspection and control shall be "within the framework" of the Security Council (as proposed by Russia), but that special inspection organs shall derive their power and status from the conventions establishing them (as urged by Australia and Canada). Secretary of State Byrnes told the General Assembly that the United States recognizes that the veto rights of nations on the Security Council applies to the drafting of these conventions.

Veto Power. In this connection it should be noted that on December 13 the Assembly adopted by a vote of thirty-six to six a resolution urging the great powers to make every effort to use the veto in such a way as not to impede the Security Council from reaching decisions promptly. The resolution did not contain censure of the great powers for abuse of the veto, as urged by Australia. The United States and Britain voted for the resolution; France and China abstained; Russia accused the Western powers of playing "the game" of small countries and said that "warmongers" were trying to get rid of the veto, thereupon voting against the resolution.

The work of the General Assembly thus reveals a variegated pattern of diverging national views. The great powers did not by any means always agree with one another, thus at least spiking the fear of small countries that the "Big Five" would become a new Holy Alliance. On one issue after another Russia, which continued to demand great-power unanimity, opposed the United States and Britain, but without blocking United Nations action by its opposition; and it took the initiative in making helpful suggestions, notably on disarmament. France sought throughout to play the role of moderator between East and West. The Latin American countries, which at first had been regarded as a permanent bloc, split wide open on the question of Spain, and some of them, notably Chile, were found on occasion supporting Russia. The British Dominions, as is their wont, showed a spirit of independence in their attitude toward the great powers and made constructive contributions to discussions of major problems.

For different reasons many of the nations came closer to accepting the concept of collective intervention in internal affairs than could have been anticipated when the Charter was drafted in San Francisco. The Assembly adopted a resolution urging member nations to recall their envoys from Franco Spain, condemned the treatment of Indians in South Africa, and laid the groundwork for an elaborate system of international inspection of troops and armaments, as well as of the use of atomic energy for peace-time purposes. We are still far indeed from anything resembling world government, but we can hardly expect nations to make so sharp a transition overnight, without preliminary readjustments. What we do have now—and that is the fundamental achievement of the General Assembly, which has justified its assigned function of "town meeting of the world"—is a growing consciousness, in John Donne's memorable phrase, that as nations, no less than as individuals, we all "belong to mankind."

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Obituary for Veterans' Housing

BY BRYANT PUTNEY

Washington, December 15

THE Veterans' Emergency Housing Program, in a serious condition since Wilson Wyatt resigned two weeks ago, died yesterday. President Truman delivered the funeral oration—an announcement that some housing controls will be abandoned and the rest greatly relaxed. The President's statement makes it clear that from now on the Administration will depend mainly on pious hopes rather than on forthright action to deal with the housing crisis. The government's housing program is no longer an emergency program. And most certainly it is not a veterans' housing program.

The President's action paved the way for a speedy return to a building free-for-all in which speculative profits will come first and homes for veterans last.

This turn of events is a signal triumph for what Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., accurately described as "one of the highest-powered, most selfish lobbies known in the annals of our country"—the combination of real-estate and banking interests, speculative builders, and building-materials producers. During the last few months these groups have whipped up one of the slickest grass-roots propaganda campaigns ever organized, in an effort to persuade the country that governmental red tape was strangling builders' efforts to put up houses.

Whatever its effect on the average citizen, the campaign made quick converts of George Allen and other members of the palace guard. One of the first moves of the Presidential clique was to block Wyatt's efforts to get RFC loans for producers of industrialized houses. This was easily accomplished, with Allen sitting on RFC's board of directors. Next, price controls on building materials were swept away in the general decontrol débâcle of early November. At this point Wyatt visited the White House to find out how the President really stood on housing.

Although the White House has, until now, suppressed Wyatt's recommendations, the contents of his report leaked out a few days ago. Decontrol of prices and wages made it "doubly necessary to utilize fully and effectively the remaining controls and other available tools to speed and aid residential construction," Wyatt told the President. He added: "There are really only two choices. The country must adopt and carry through an all-out veterans' housing program—a real emergency program—or return to building as usual. The ground between offers nothing but confusion and blasted hopes to the homeless veteran."

Truman made his choice. "We have reached the period of the relaxing of war-time emergency measures," he said. Wyatt, an honest liberal and realist, had no alternative but to resign.

Much of the blame for the defeat of the emergency housing program must be pinned on the national leaders of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Amvets. For months these outfits played along with the builders' lobby, resisting strong rank-and-file pressure to support Wyatt. The American Veterans' Committee, alone among the major veterans' organizations, consistently and vigorously fought for the program.

After the V. F. W. convention approved a resolution supporting the program last September, National Commander Louis Starr tried to disclaim it—on the extraordinary grounds that the noise of a passing train had prevented delegates from hearing the resolution on which they were voting! The V. F. W.'s executive board finally had to order Starr to get behind the program. National officers of Amvets likewise underwent a last-minute conversion, following that organization's November convention, but by that time it was too late. Legion officers have, at least, remained steadfast in their loyalty to the interests opposing Wyatt and are now advocating the liquidation of the NHA.

That Wyatt had the uncompromising support neither of veterans—who were most vitally affected by his program—nor of the Truman Administration as a whole makes the job he has done in the last twelve months the more remarkable.

The F. W. Dodge Corporation predicted last year that not more than 325,000 dwelling units would be started in 1946. But in the first ten months of this year nearly 580,000 permanent units were begun—not counting conversions or temporary structures, which bring the total up to 882,000. Total "starts" for the year are now expected to reach a million. The volume of housing units completed has been rising steadily each month and by the end of October totaled over half a million, of which 341,000 were new permanent homes and apartments.

It is important to note, also, that a substantial proportion of the houses being built are priced at levels that veterans can afford. Although the ceiling until now has been $10,000, half of the houses so far authorized will sell for not more than $7,500, or rent for $60 or less.

Wyatt's efforts to break the materials bottleneck have been highly successful. Over-all materials production is

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nearly double what it was a year ago, and more than half again as large as in 1939. "With few exceptions," says the latest report of the Civilian Production Administration, "critical building materials made spectacular production gains in October." New all-time highs were reached, CPA reported, in the production of sinks (up 42 per cent over September), watercloset bowls (up 22 per cent), gypsum board and lath (up 16 per cent), warm-air furnaces (up 14 per cent), and water heaters (up 19 per cent). Output of bricks, plywood, nails, hardwood flooring, and radiators set new post-war records.

Besides stimulating builders of conventional dwellings, Wyatt undertook to encourage the development of factory-built houses made of steel, aluminum, plastics, and other unorthodox materials. He foresaw that the machine-made, mass-produced house offered a means of emerging from the technological Dark Ages of the housebuilding industry, of cutting the cost of shelter in half, and of ultimately making home-owners out of slum-dwellers. To telescope into a few months a development that otherwise would take years, Wyatt worked out a special program of assistance for industrialized house-producers —including RFC loans to finance large-scale production, guaranteed market contracts, and other devices.

Wyatt's plan for government aid to this fledgling industry was squarely in the tradition of Alexander Hamilton's "Report on Manufactures." It contemplated subsidies which were trifling in comparison with those dealt out in the past to the railroad, steamship, aviation, and automobile industries, among others. But it aroused violent opposition from the numerous groups which have a vested interest in conventional high-cost building. These groups displayed the same stubbornness—and the same want of foresight—as the carriage-makers, who, thirty years ago, threw Tom Durant out of their shops when he suggested they convert to automobile production.

Leading the fight against this New Deal for housebuilding, George Allen's RFC first stalled, and then flatly refused NHA-backed loan applications from several promising industrial house manufacturers on the ground of "insufficient equity." (Among the applications rejected was one from the Lustron Corporation, in spite of the fact that the First National Bank of Chicago had notified the RFC it would lend this company $20,000,000 if the government would issue a 90 per cent guaranty.) The RFC's action shattered Wyatt's hopes of producing 500,000 or more metal and concrete homes next year. It made imperative the White House showdown, from which the defenders of the status quo in housebuilding emerged victorious.

Under the plan announced yesterday by the President a façade of controls will be retained to create the illusion that the Administration is taking care of veterans' housing needs. But with the $10,000 ceiling on new-housing prices removed and home building opened up to non-veterans, builders will speedily return to the pre-war practice of skimming the cream off the housing market—putting up luxury homes beyond the reach of most veterans. The promised relaxation of controls on non-residential construction, moreover, can only mean that materials which ought to be used for housing will be diverted to the more lucrative business of building juke-joints and movie palaces. There is no reason to doubt Wyatt's prediction that the scrapping of his program will make it impossible to meet the government's goal of 1,500,000 housing units in 1947.

Homeless America

BY CHARLES ABRAMS

I. Illusions About Housing

LIVING in a garage or slum is bad; living in a fool's paradise is worse. We had better realize that the housing needs of two-thirds of the population are not going to be met, even if materials and labor become plentiful. No adequate federal, state, or city program has been devised. A solution of the problem is barred by certain illusions which have confused Congressional thinking, have shaped federal policy into a mass of contradictions, and have now become the principal weapon in the propaganda arsenal of a real-estate lobby blocking a realistic approach to housing reform. Unless we dispel these illusions, the housing problem will persist, and each succeeding crisis be worse than the one before.

CHARLES ABRAMS, former counsel to the New York City Housing Authority, is author of "The Future of Housing," which was published last week. This is the first in a series of three articles in which he will discuss the housing problem in America. The second will appear next week.

Illusion 1: The housing shortage has been caused by the war. Actually, there was already a serious deficit of homes in 1936, and the housing famine was clearly foreseen. It was known that at least 7,000,000 homes would be required ten years later, that the building industry was not producing enough houses to meet that need, and that it was doing absolutely nothing for the low-income family. Our present veterans would have reached mar-

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riageable age and needed homes, war or no war. Housing shortages have occurred time and again during the last fifty years. With building costs steadily mounting, millions of families have been periodically denied the benefit of new dwellings. Two-fifths of our non-farm homes were known to be below civilized standards before the war began; two-thirds of our farm families were improperly sheltered. No private houses have been built for low-income families for decades. None will be.

Illusion 2: The bottleneck in housing production is due to the war. Yet we emerged from the war with a production capacity greater than ever before in our history. During the war we built one and one-half million houses and were set to put up many times that number if necessary. It was when the war ended that house production struck a snag. Our vast stores of building materials have been siphoned off to commercial construction; war-housing agencies have been scuttled when most needed; local housing authorities who could be building for veterans today are without funds.

The cancelation of "Order L-41," which rationed materials for construction, is the outstanding post-war scandal. Hugh Potter, brain-truster of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, was made inter-agency housing factotum just long enough to cancel the rationing of materials and create the bottleneck that still plagues building today. When, months later, rationing was reinstated, the storehouse was empty; there was no longer anything to ration. With thousands of factories and millions of workers released for civilian production, with the demand for homes keen, and with mortgage money plentiful, only 286,000 new permanent homes could be built in the first nine months of 1946.

Illusion 3: Private enterprise will solve the housing problem the moment building materials are available. As a matter of fact, the building industry has failed for decades to meet both housing needs and demands. It has functioned not at all for low-income families, only erratically for the top third. In a highly industrialized society that is an absurdity. Twenty-five per cent of all non-farm families had incomes under $1,000 in 1941 and could afford a house costing no more than $2,000. Yet only 1 per cent of Federal Housing Administration homes were available at that figure. Forty-one per cent of non-farm families earned under $1,500. Only 3 per cent of FHA homes were produced at a price such families could afford. Today, with building costs up 60 to 100 per cent, only the well-to-do can live in any houses produced by the private builder. No houses can be built for rental in New York at prices within the reach of 96 per cent of the city's employed veterans.

Illusion 4: Housing is an emergency problem and will respond to emergency treatment. We have had four separate emergency housing programs in twelve years—to meet the "unemployment emergency" in 1933, the "defense emergency" in 1940, the "war emergency" in 1941, and now the "veterans' housing emergency." So long as the building industry fails to provide houses within the means of the rank and file, such emergencies are unavoidable: in consequence, slums will continue to take their toll in death, disease, and crime, and home owners will repeatedly face foreclosure when houses bought at inflated prices fail to be paid for out of reduced family earnings. Discontent, disillusionment, and lawlessness are by-products of our defunct home-building enterprise and our failure to evolve a long-range program to rationalize it.

Illusion 5: The housing problem can be met by reducing labor costs. While the building trades can be blamed for jurisdictional disputes and other disorders in house production, they are hardly responsible for all its snags and snarls; certainly not for the lag in building or the present high costs. The average annual earnings of skilled construction workers before the war were under a thousand dollars. The labor cost is only 30 per cent of the total cost of building a home. If wages of building workers were cut in half, the price of a new home would be reduced by only about 15 per cent, which is but a fraction of the recent rise in building costs.

Who, then, is at fault? The main stumbling-block to production is the home builder. The average builder puts up no more than four houses a year; 65 per cent of the builders of single-family homes produced only one house a year before the war. Most have their offices in their hats. The industry remains in the hands of small operators, undercapitalized, wastefully putting together thousands of separate parts in hundreds of separate processes. The petty operator is unable to plan ahead or anticipate housing demand; he lacks the benefit of organization, is unequipped for assembly-line techniques. His limitations have been solidified in a pattern of incompetence, trade restraints, excessive costs, and vested interests unparalleled in any other American enterprise.

Labor costs, excessive charges for materials, and high interest rates are all hinged to the home builders' ineptitude. Building-trades unions, fearful of glutting the labor market, train only as many apprentices as are em-

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ployable over the long run. When housing demand is intense, a labor shortage is inevitable. When building volume subsides, unemployment follows. Since home building influences general activity, the consequences to the economy may be disastrous. The lack of organization in the industry causes workers, even in boom periods, to lose 30 per cent of their working time. If the industry were well organized, labor could be more efficiently used and work more evenly distributed.

The hundreds of participants in the building of a house are removed from the builder and the home buyer by a wall of middlemen who charge what the traffic will bear. Thirty thousand parts go into a small house; twelve trades are called upon to put them together in five hundred operations. The builder, contractor, and subcontractor add mark-ups to each item; so that a pyramid of cost-plus charges pushes up the price beyond the reach of the average purse. A dollar's worth of plaster going into the house is increased in price 300 per cent in passing from the factory to the trowel. If the final cost of a home is excessive, the builder is not concerned; he produces only for those who can pay the price. *Shelter, one of life's essentials, has become a luxury.*

Price-pegging in building materials is almost routine; competition is restricted. There is little incentive to reduce costs, since a cut in one or even a dozen items would not reduce the final cost appreciably or widen the market of consumers. More than half the contracts for fabricated steel are booked by two companies; four leading corporations control 82 per cent of prepared finished plaster and 90 per cent of molding and gauging plaster; more than three-fourths of important plumbing articles are made by four producers. Two corporations control 95 per cent of all plate-glass production; four companies, 80 per cent of copper products.

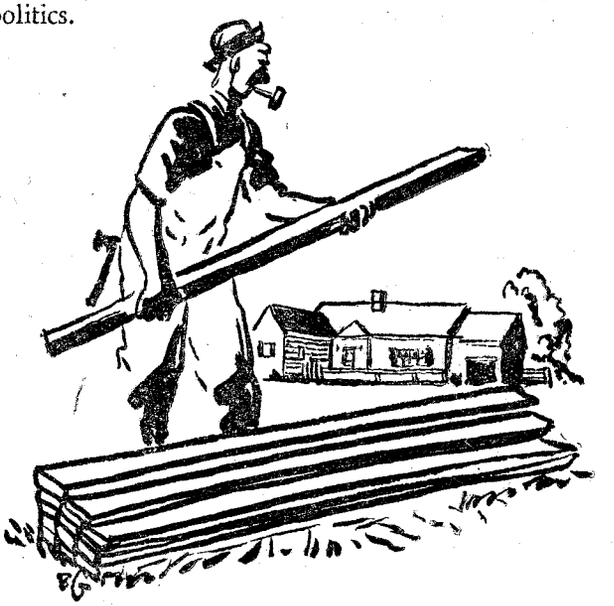
Bigness alone should not mean high prices. But concentration of power in an industry where the final product is unstandardized and the purchaser too small to be able to bargain effectively provides a field day for the manufacturer. Thus prices on steel and gypsum are often quoted from a distant basing point, though delivery may come from a nearby mill. Prices on mill lumber are rigged; base prices are maintained for window frames, stairs, banisters, door frames, cabinets, ornamental woodwork. Dealers and jobbers in plumbing supplies are forbidden to sell directly to the job on penalty of being disciplined, and jobbers' trade discounts are canceled when they sell directly to the consumer or builder. Local ordinances often specify patented products though others might be used more economically. A Pennsylvania housing authority found that brick walls leaked when the mortar mix required by a local code was used. By violating the ordinance it was able to build walls that were waterproof.

The mortgage lender, too, has been able to pursue his exactions unchecked. The mortgage system masks the speculative nature of the home-buying transaction. One no longer owns a home but an equity in a home; a mortgage debt, once shunned as a first step to ruin, has become a casual routine. Open competition in mortgages is restrained by associations of institutional lenders who oppose an open market for insured mortgage paper. The system does not allow for possible unemployment of the home buyer during the mortgage term or for any other misfortune which may bring default and cancelation of his whole investment. With each mortgage loan a separate transaction, interest—even on government-insured mortgages—is almost twice the rate of government bonds. The pressing need of the builder for money, his inability to bargain effectively with the mortgage lender, and above all his indifference are responsible for the home owners paying a tribute in excess interest of more than $40,000,000 a year on FHA houses alone.

The only solution is the public agency. The housing problem can only be met by recasting the role of the home builder, by replacing him with an entrepreneur large enough and strong enough to rationalize building along twentieth-century lines, able to produce homes in the quantity and quality needed. Only the public agency qualifies for this role in America today. There is no other way out of the housing morass.

But such a solution is being blocked by a sixth illusion: housing has become involved in a semantic war in which terms like "socialism" and "government competition" are being loosely thrown about to the terror of the uninformed public. Government building during a war emergency is permissible, but government building in the post-war emergency is taboo, paradoxical as this may seem.

A small lobby of builders and lenders has nurtured these illusions in the public mind. Its success in capitalizing on the deception is unique in the history of pressure politics.



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The People's Front

THE principal reason for the decline of the European Socialists has been their failure to perceive the magnitude of the social revolution that swept Europe after World War I and, following a period of ebb in the thirties, received a fresh, powerful impetus from World War II. The present situation of the French Socialist Party illustrates the consequences of this failure.

The outbreak of World War II found the French party divided and paralyzed by the conflict, in progress everywhere, between the Communist and Socialist wings of the working-class movement. Hatred of the Communists so obsessed many Socialists as to drive them into an anti-Socialist position, even to the extent of support of the policy of appeasement, before 1939, and later of the Vichy regime. Had the party, in the first year of the war, purged itself of the right-wing revisionist elements, it could easily have assumed leadership of the French nation; the Communists offered little challenge, for their opposition to the "imperialist war" had made them thoroughly unpopular throughout France.

The Socialists failed to do so, and by 1942 the situation had completely changed. The Communists became the spearhead of the resistance from the moment they entered the struggle against Hitler and Vichy. The Socialists, on the other hand, appeared unable to counteract the poison spread by the Municheers within their ranks; while thousands of them fought magnificently in the underground, others gathered around Paul Faure and obediently served Pétain and his cabal. True, the first clandestine conference of the party expelled these renegades, but the damage was already done. At the same time, there were good Socialists, especially among the exiles, who, in a doctrinaire mood, refused to recognize the necessity of rallying around De Gaulle. All this increased division and confusion. As a consequence, in the decisive years from 1942 until the liberation, the Communists rather than the Socialists became, in the eyes of the average Frenchman, the symbol of unity and resistance, standing not for a class but for the nation. That explains why large numbers of Frenchmen, particularly in the provinces, who had always voted Radical Socialist, because Herriot's party was for them both the patriotic and the anti-clerical party of France, voted in 1946 for the Communists.

Soon after the war the French Socialists were offered a new opportunity to assume leadership. When De Gaulle abandoned his role of first resistant to become the spokesman for reaction, he could no longer serve as balance-wheel among the conflicting forces of post-war France. At that moment the reins should logically have passed to the Socialists. Here was a challenge to their capacity for dynamic leadership. Unfortunately, they failed to meet it.

Not realizing that Europe is in another period of revolutionary upsurge, the Socialists have become dominated, once more, by the fear of Communist hegemony. In the Constituent Assembly, and in the successive election campaigns this year, they attempted to restore the political equilibrium by aligning themselves alongside the center parties. The result was a marked loss of labor support and the party's growing dependence on the unpredictable middle-class vote: many working-class Socialists, dissatisfied with the direction of the party but not ready to leave it, voted Communist. But many middle-class members, sensing the swing to the left among the rank and file, voted M. R. P. or Radical Socialist. The party lost votes on both sides.

The fundamental weakness of its position became evident in Léon Blum's famous analysis of the results of the June elections. Refusing to admit that the party's failure to provide leadership in a revolutionary period had alienated a large part of its following, he insisted that the Socialists had been too ready to assume the responsibility of governing. Instead of laying down a strong domestic and foreign policy which would help restore the confidence of the membership, he argued that the party should accept as little power and as few posts as possible in the new ministerial coalition.

Blum's recent acceptance of the premiership, even for the limited period between now and January, when the new government will be chosen, may eliminate one of the party's chief weaknesses. The Socialists could not have continued much longer in the impossible situation of having their outstanding leader refuse a post in the government or even a seat in the Assembly. No doubt the idea of rounding out his long and admirable career as a kind of Holy Spirit of Western socialism appeals to a man of Blum's temperament. But such a role would have little meaning for the cold, hungry workers of France; they want men who will lead the fight against the old privileged interests and against the danger of a fascist revival. They know that the problem of rebuilding the industrial strength of France can only be solved along socialist lines. The Communist slogan, "Produce and Build," has meaning only when it is linked with a broad program of collective control of industry and finance. This, above all, is the task the Socialist Party must assume under Blum if it is to regain its fading power and prestige.

To counteract the process of decline, the party in France, as elsewhere in Europe, must also find a way to work with the Communists without being swallowed up or dominated by them. It is a difficult problem, but one that must be faced. The masses cannot understand why it is all right to collaborate with the M. R. P. or the Christian Democrats, but not with the Communists. They want working-class unity.

Nor will the masses accept a foreign policy oriented toward a Western bloc under capitalist America's guidance. Rank-and-file Socialists are, no doubt, irritated by the frequent zigzags of the Communist Party line and even more by the Communist habit of setting up bourgeois mediocrities as temporary idols when it serves their purpose. The French masses dislike many aspects of Soviet foreign policy. But they will not be pushed into an anti-Communist or an anti-Russian position—as their leaders have at last learned, at great cost.

DEL VAYO

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Students and Politics

BY HAROLD J. LASKI

London, December 10

A STUDENTS' organization has one of two fairly well-defined purposes. It exists either to make the path of learning an easier one, or to promote a body of specific political doctrine in which its members are interested. The first type, of which the International Student Service is a good example, is necessarily unconcerned with doctrine. Its purpose is to provide relief, to pool information, to arrange the exchange of visits. It pays no attention to the student's nationality, religious creed, political outlook, or economic views—with one exception. That exception is its insistence upon conditions which make for academic freedom. For the more open the atmosphere in which students live together and the wider the experience to which they are given access, the more creative is likely to be the intellectual adventure upon which they are engaged.

A body of this kind has no relation to a student society which promotes political doctrine. It is not Republican or Democratic, Liberal or Conservative, Communist or Socialist. It does not exist to reform the world. It has no view of the universe which it must promulgate to the exclusion of other views. It has no attitude toward the atomic bomb, or the problem of Palestine, or the future of Trieste. Its business, quite simply, is to make it easier for students to get the best out of their training and to help them meet as many students of other countries as possible. If American students meet French students or English students or Czech students, what is important is that all of them are students, and not, on this level, that they are concerned to give the world this shape rather than that, to make one set of principles more acceptable than another. Toleration and neutrality are the main pillars of the policy that a student society of this type must try to promote. The alternative is a dangerous one: it may become the instrument of purposes interested not in easing the path to learning but in narrowing it so that only those tread it who share a particular outlook.

Few people doubt that a university may well develop student societies of every political sort. It is an admirable thing for the undergraduate to have a political outlook which he can examine either in conjunction with those who share it or in organized discussion with those who believe his political views to be wholly wrong. And there is everything to be said for putting the political context of student life on the widest possible international basis. What is important here is that everyone should be aware precisely what is being done. An international of Conservative students should present itself as what it is. It should be clear to all who watch it in operation that its activities are intended for the central purpose of promoting the spread of Conservative doctrine. It has only indirect relevance to student life. Its members are of student age; they belong to organizations of the university type. But it is not because they are students in such organizations that they form Conservative bodies or meet as a Conservative international. The essential thing about members of such bodies is that they are Conservatives. If they attack Russia, or regret the policy of the Socialist government of Great Britain, or insist that nothing be done to enlarge the scope of the TVA, the important thing is to realize that they are speaking not as students but as Conservatives. What they must refrain from claiming is the right to speak in the name of a student body which has no rigidities of doctrine and no formulas to push forward save its faith in the freest possible interchange of ideas.

It is far from certain that the importance of these distinctions is being made clear by those who are spending so much energy and money in the promotion of student conferences and exchanges since the end of the war. This lack of clarity has no single source. In part, it is due to the natural anxiety of youth to express its views about the reshaping of the world. And there is a sense of frustration from the fact that the major controls of action are in the hands of what youth regards as a gerontocracy—a term which covers almost everyone more than thirty-five years old. Something is due, also, to a muddle-mindedness in youth. The group or conference passes a political resolution without having the slightest idea that it is political; or it links itself to some other group, or agrees to send delegates to some conference, without any awareness that it is lending itself to the support of a political policy.

A good example of this kind of lack of clarity was provided by the International Youth Congress which was held in London in the winter of 1945. It was attended by delegates from many countries, including the United States. The striking thing about most of the national delegations was the fact that though they were supposed to represent all sorts of youth groups in each country, delegates from the Communist youth constituted, if not a majority, at least a proportion in each national delega-

HAROLD J. LASKI is well known as one of the leaders of the British Labor Party and as the author of many stimulating books on political and economic problems.

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tion far greater than any number to which Communist strength in that country would have entitled it. The sponsors of the conference did not invite the British Labor Party to be represented; its Executive Committee, indeed, was unaware that the conference was to be held. When delegates from the Socialist youth of Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, and France looked for the representatives of British Socialist youth, they could not be found, and contacts had to be organized outside the conference. During its progress, it became clear, in fact, that the conference was dominated by the Communist youth, who had so arranged its program and procedure that the strategic control of the conference's policy was almost wholly in their hands. It is not, therefore, surprising that the permanent organization which has emerged from the London conference should be, to all intents and purposes, a body which is destined to play variations upon the Communist theme.

This is the source, I suggest, of the third factor which makes for lack of clarity once the original distinction I have drawn is absent. All sorts of youth groups meet together; alternatively, some youth group from one country goes to another. In the first case, the Communist group is the one delegation which has made up its mind about (a) the policy it will propose and (b) the nominations it will make. It dominates the conference partly because it has this clear sense of direction and partly because, during the conference, its representatives devote their energies to this and to no other task. They have their way because their strategy makes opposition to them futile. The opposition is hesitant, divided, uncertain. The Communist attitude cuts across all national boundaries; it elicits support from parts of other youth groups, on all kinds of grounds; and, as a rule, its delegates have been carefully chosen and have the means of being lavish in their hospitality. They create the impression that a refusal to "go along" with them would deprive the conference of value. It seems evident that if they are supported, something, even something important—though no one quite knows what—is likely to be accomplished. At the end, a permanent secretariat is pretty certain to be created of which the main positions either fall into Communist hands or into the hands of people on whom they feel they can count. The delegates then return to their respective countries unaware, or only half aware, that they have become the instruments of a purpose quite different from any they had intended to espouse.

Nor is the alternative case less interesting. A national youth delegation goes from, say, the United States to Europe. It visits London and Paris and Prague. In London it finds considerable difficulty in making any left contacts save with the Communist Party, for the British Labor Party does not have a central youth organization. It finds in Paris an uneasy but official collaboration between Socialist and Communist youth; naturally enough, the strength rather than the weakness of the collaboration is emphasized to the visitors from overseas. In Prague it finds a Communist youth which proudly introduces its American guests to a Communist Prime Minister. In each country the delegates learn of Communist enthusiasm for freedom, for experiment in social welfare, of Communist willingness to collaborate with any group which is anti-fascist and eager to make a better world. Their experience in Prague is of a government which, despite its Communist Prime Minister, seems tolerant, open-minded, enthusiastic about large-scale reconstruction. They find there a good deal of the atmosphere characteristic of Washington in the early months of the New Deal; they see the chains of servitude being thrown off by men and women who feel that they have a world to win. It is not altogether surprising that they become enthusiastic converts to the principle of all-in collaboration with the left.

The Communists, let me add, deserve the collaboration they secure. They work for it every day and all day. They adjust their attitude with extraordinary skill to the people with whom they have to deal. They give the young delegates the heady conviction of immense possibilities being open and of great achievement being possible. They give them, even more, the sense of being able to move from the position of spectators to that of actors in the great world drama that is being played. They satisfy the anxiety of youth to be accepted as mature, experienced, even significant. And the young American delegates meet each day with other young people whose work seems exhilarating, even important. They see changes occurring before their eyes. To return to an America where the political situation gives youth its opportunity only by accident and, even then, excludes it from opportunity where it is unconventional, seems a dull and drab routine.

Yet the lesson of the last twenty years is unmistakable. A students' organization which, like the International Student Service, has no direct political objectives will only destroy itself if it becomes the instrument of others. It becomes changed from a forum into an arena. Intrigue deforms every aspect of its life. Each group has to jockey for position; each purpose is set in the context of some ulterior motive which one group seeks to conceal from another. It is transformed from a cooperative adventure into a wasps' nest of party bickering in which what is important is not the general enrichment of student life but its subordination to some triumphant dogmatism which has the energy and the resolution to triumph over its rivals. The real lesson of these years is the supreme danger of premature dogmatism. The implication of that lesson is that the best a college can give is a way of thought. If it teaches what must be thought and, still more, teaches it upon what is made a battleground, respect for freedom is lost in the glitter of a false victory.

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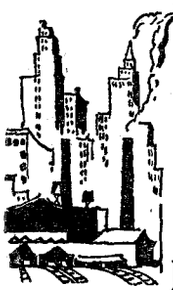

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

New Blow for Consumers

IN THE schedule of freight-rate increases granted by the Interstate Commerce Commission to the railroads I find the following item: "Handling charges on all commodities except milk and cream in baggage or passenger train service, including excess baggage but *not including corpses*—25 per cent" (my emphasis).

We must, I suppose, be grateful to the ICC for not increasing the cost of dying, but most of us are more immediately concerned with the effect of higher transportation charges on the cost of living. According to the *Journal of Commerce,* the effect on prices will be "only moderate," and this is no doubt true if we consider the immediate impact of increased rates on any single commodity or manufactured article. But the total addition to our transportation bill will be about a billion dollars, the bulk of which will be passed on to ultimate consumers, usually on a cost-plus basis.

For instance, the charge for moving flour from Buffalo to New York is expected to rise by 3 cents per 100-pound sack. That amount will be paid by the wholesalers, who will pass it on to the bakers and grocery jobbers, probably with some small addition. By the time the flour reaches the retailers, the extra freight expense may be 5 cents per 100 pounds or one-half cent per 10-pound bag; and since retail prices are not usually expressed in such fractions, that could mean that the housewife would be asked for another cent a bag.

I am not saying that this will happen in this particular case. I cite it as an example of what could happen, for it is a law of economic physics that, in a sellers' market, any cost added at one end of the pipeline of distribution will expand at each stage until it reaches the other end. That is the result of what is known, in business parlance, as "maintaining one's margin."

The following examples of higher freight charges must, therefore, be regarded as basic minima, rather than the actual increases which will be shouldered by ultimate consumers:

Cement, delivered New York: 3 to 4 cents a barrel.

Lumber, from N. E. states to East Coast: $1.25 to $1.50 per 1,000 board feet.

Coal, delivered New York: 17 to 22 cents a ton.

Grains, at chief terminal points: 1 to 1¼ cents a bushel.

In certain cases where prices have recently risen very steeply, it is suggested that added freight costs may be absorbed by the producers. Certainly, in the case of metals and paper, two commodities mentioned in this connection, the producers could well afford to do so; but in view of the tremendous unsatisfied demand for their products, it will probably be hard for them to resist the temptation to make the buyers pay.

The department stores, which are making unprecedented profits, could also well afford to absorb their higher freight bill. However, except in the case of a few items in which competition is becoming keen, the customer is likely to pay as usual. "Added cost," according to the *Journal of Commerce,* "will probably have to be passed on to consumers *in toto* on refrigerators, radios, household furniture, linoleum, napery, and numerous other household goods and furnishings." The increase can be expected to average about 1 per cent of the retail price. This won't seem like an alarming extra in many cases, but it is the accumulation of such petty additions to the cost of living that threatens to break consumers' backs and undermine the post-war boom.

Why did the ICC ignore the protests of the OPA, the Department of Commerce, and representatives of the shippers, and give the railroads practically the whole of their demands? Its report declares that the rate boost is intended "to offset, partially at least, increased wages and costs of materials and supplies to which they [the carriers] have been subjected." The commissioners appear to have accepted the companies' own projection of traffics for 1947, on the basis of which a net deficit for the Class I roads was forecast. But, curiously enough, they do not directly pass on the accuracy of this estimate, though if anybody is in a position to make an educated guess at future traffic developments, it is surely the ICC. Only obliquely does the report hint at the possibility that events will prove the increases unjustified, by quoting a 1920 opinion of the late Commissioner Joseph Eastman, who declared: "If the rates prove unduly high, they may later be reduced. The present proceeding has nothing of finality about it."

It will be remembered that, early in 1942, the ICC authorized an increase in freight rates, only to rescind it a few months later (over the bitter protests of the carriers) when the tremendous surge of war traffics showed that railroad earnings had not the least need of such assistance. In that year net profits reached an all-time high of $902,000,000, and in 1943 they were not much below that figure. I am not suggesting that such bonanzas will be repeated in 1947, even with the aid of the billion-dollar hand-out just received. But the development of traffics in the past few months, in line, as always, with the curve of industrial activity, which is moving steadily upward, suggests that the railroaders' forecasts of 1947 earnings may prove far too pessimistic.

Of course, if the much prophesied slump comes along, the picture will change. If industrial production falls off sharply, and the price level breaks, railroad business would be hard hit. But, in such an eventuality, higher freight rates will not prevent many of the companies from running into the red: in fact, higher freight rates may help to worsen the position, for they will certainly encourage the kind of competition from other forms of transport which hit railroads in the thirties. Railroads can very easily "price themselves out of the market," to use the financial catch-phrase of the moment. Their crying need, on any long-term view, is not so much more revenue as more managerial imagination, brains, and energy. As the bad boy of the industry, Robert R. Young, told a Senate committee last March, railroading is suffering from "dry rot," thanks to a banker control concerned with commissions and underwriting profits rather than efficiency.

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IN ONE EAR

BY LOU FRANKEL

TO MOST critics of radio, the prime example of public-service programming is the "forum" type of broadcast. Yet forums differ in technique and quality to a great degree.

And, interestingly enough, the forums you hear on the networks bear, in both style and approach, a remarkable relationship to the philosophy of the network involved.

Thus, NBC's "University of Chicago Round Table," on Sunday afternoon, is meticulously stilted, in so far as argument is concerned. Each side of the topic under discussion is presented with scrupulous fairness. The program suffers from over-intellectualism and often verges on the pedantic. Although it has a high Hooperating—4.8 as of the last report—it is outdistanced by the Sammy Kaye orchestra on ABC with a 7.7 rating.

Columbia's "People's Platform," also broadcast early Sunday afternoon, similarly reflects the philosophy of its network. Here, the moderators, Lyman Bryson and Dwight Cooke, exhibit a deft flair for keeping the participants to the subject at hand, despite an ad lib style. There is considerable leeway in the discussion; yet rarely do the speakers drift off the topic or indulge in personalities or acrimonious crossfire. And, invariably, the moderator remains in the background, coming to the mike only to keep the debate on target or to sum up at the closing. It is adult, easy to listen to, and lively without becoming rambunctious. "People's Platform" has a 4.3 Hooper.

ABC's "America's Town Meeting," heard on Thursday evening, is a carry-over from the days when ABC was the Blue network and owned and operated by NBC. Here, for the first time, the studio audience came into the picture to fire questions at the speakers. The major changes in the program, of late, are reducing the speakers from two to one for each side of the debate, and adding an interrogator for each position. With this technique, Moderator George V. Denny, Jr., has managed to spruce up both the debate and the question-and-answer session. Under the old format the show had a tendency to get windy, and opened the way for claques in the audience to gang up on one of the speakers in the question-and-answer period. Now the program is much more stable. The interrogators pick up the slack each speaker may have left, set the pace for the audience questioning, and keep the program from becoming a massacre, as it has been at times in the past.

"America's Town Meeting" has a wider appeal than other radio forums, since there's less restraint on the speakers and studio quizzers; yet, because it is up against some of the top network programs, its rating in the last Hooper report was only 3.9. To the American Broadcasting Company, this program (chiefly because of moderator Denny) has been a godsend. It has kept the network in the news, thanks to Denny's ability to handle speakers and studio audiences and to select stimulating topics, without once putting the network on the spot.

Ted Granik's "American Forum of the Air," Tuesdays on Mutual, is a perfect example of a forum gone wrong. Here, the moderator tries so hard to make the newspapers that the program, as often as not, winds up as a soapbox for much that is not on the agenda. Granik's approach is to invite a brace of speakers for each side and let them get into a free-for-all. He sits back, watches the clock, and lets the invective fall where it may. There is little, if any, attempt to guide the proceedings. The tendency has been to let emotion set the pace for both the discussion period and the session of studio-audience questions.

The "American Forum of the Air" is a blatant attempt to grab listeners by lowering the standards of public debate. Yet its last Hooperating is 2.2 for the 45 minutes, though the low figure is due, no doubt, partly to the competition of Fibber McGee and Molly and Bob Hope on NBC, a Hollywood drama and Arthur Godfrey on CBS, and the Boston Symphony on ABC. Recently, this program has taken to asking listeners to phone in a vote to stations for tabulations, presumably, of a public decision on the topics discussed.

Locally, there are a number of good forum programs that I know about. WQXR, in New York, for example, has a pip called "What's on Your Mind" that they put on before a different women's club each week. It uses two New York *Times* staff writers, plus guest speakers for each viewpoint. WMCA, another New York independent station, has a weekly debate program which uses the Commerce and Industry Association—a kind of Chamber of Commerce—as the participating organization. Another group, less identified with the business interests of the community, might have served better.

The League for Industrial Democracy and the Union for Democratic Action have less frequent programs over New York's WEVD.

One of the best local forum programs is on WSYR, the NBC affiliate, in Syracuse. This station uses the local unit of the League of Women Voters as the participating organization, thus giving the program a standard of impartiality to which it adheres, and permitting the selection of a wide variety of local, national, and international topics. And, in addition, this program does not make the mistake of overreaching itself by scheduling topics which the available speakers cannot handle without faking.

Does your local station have a forum show?

WORTH HEARING

HOAGY CARMICHAEL SINGS (CBS, Sundays). A grand quarter-hour of excellent popular music and good piano. The commercials don't measure up to the talent.

THEATER GUILD ON THE AIR (ABC, Sundays). Dramatization of great plays. Far above the usual radio dramatic fare. Commercials are quiet and institutional. And the script usually resembles the original.

BROADWAY TALKS BACK (MBS, Mondays). In which the playwrights defend their offspring with the theatrical critics of the New York dailies in opposition.

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BOOKS and the ARTS

The Holy Innocents

Listen, the hay-bells tinkle as the cart
Wavers on rubber tires along the tar
And cindered ice below the burlap mill
And ale-wife run. The oxen drool and start
In wonder at the fenders of a car,
And blunder hugely up St. Peter's hill.
These are the undefiled by woman—their
Sorrow is not the sorrow of this world:
King Herod shrieking vengeance at the curled
Up knees of Jesus choking in the air,

A king of speechless clods and infants. Still
The world out-Herods Herod; and the year,
The nineteen-hundred forty-fifth of grace,
Lumbers with losses up the clinkered hill
Of our purgation; and the oxen near
The worn foundations of their resting-place,
The holy manger where their bed is corn
And holly torn from Christmas. If they die,
As Jesus, in the harness, who will mourn?
Lamb of the shepherds, Child, how still you lie.

ROBERT LOWELL

The New Eumenides

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA: STORIES AND REFLECTIONS. by Franz Kafka, translated by Willa and Edwin Muir. Schocken Books. $3.

THE fullest meaning of classical tragedy is that man learns through suffering. Thus when Oedipus appears sightless and bleeding or when Achilles yields to Priam the mutilated corpse of Hector, we achieve a catharsis of pity and fear. Orestes, murderer of his mother, can at last be absolved from the literal, bloody exactions of the Old Law; expiation is no longer by eye and tooth, and under the dispensation of the younger gods the Furies are appeased. By a tragic plight entirely his own Kafka under the New Law attains an attitude of infinite resignation called by Kierkegaard the last stage prior to faith; yet the exaction of the Old Law is not remitted, and his very surrender assumes the guise of despair. Since the present collection of allegories and reflections, explicit and demonstrative, is a commentary on the earlier fictions—The Castle, The Trial, Metamorphosis—it invites us to define the nature of the Kafka tragedy.

If the usual Kafka narratives develop themselves within the "half-awake fantasies" in which, as Camus says, it would be wrong to interpret everything, these late, naked allegories with animals behaving as neurotically as men are a direct challenge to the intellect rather than the sensibility. We speculate on the symbolism of the dog that fasts or the creature that takes sanctuary in his complicated burrow, and we discover the relation of the giant mole to the faith of Kierkegaard, but at a sacrifice of the familiar "atmosphere" in Kafka's implausible, confused foregrounds. The themes are typical: the inscrutability of the will of God and its inescapable operation (Investigations of a Dog and The Great Wall of China), the involutions of anxiety far within the isolated self and the futility of either intellect or retreat before the Unknown (The Burrow), and the necessity of accepting the divine as absurd or even repulsive (The Giant Mole). At the last, evidently, Kafka was able to abbreviate the paradox of his living, his enormous fatigues, into a formal thesis instead of recording how incongruously it was revealed, perpetually astonishing as though to the eye of an amateur, within experience itself. Yet if the tone is meditative, the defensive strategy, the ruses, the eventual frustrations of these animals are those of the Kafka tragedy. Kafka's humilities and revulsions at last expressed themselves in the perplexities of the beast.

Kafka suffers, but his pain does not assure his being in the right way. Thus his little maladjustments, his acceptance of life as an interrogation chamber, amount to a distinctive tragedy—or, perhaps, a comedy—of error. The comedy issues from his belief, affirmed by Kierkegaard, that living is a wisdom whose secret is foolishness and a hope whose form is madness. Unlike Kierkegaard, he is never able to make the "leap" of faith to God. Consequently his tragedy—or his comedy—is not ultimately religious; it remains secular and ethical, but without catharsis, without purgation of pity and fear, and thus either a parody of tragedy or a parody of religion.

In this drama the very laws of probability are in abeyance; tragedy occurs by whimsy. Kafka's intimation is that "inadequate, even childish, measures may serve to rescue one from peril," an intimation due to his incorrigible naivete, the impossibility of learning through suffering or any other way. His helplessness appears as wonder: he writes of himself, "All that he does seems to him, it is true, extraordinarily new." His heroes are all amateurs to whom each triviality is a crisis. He explains in My Neighbor how advantageous it is to exaggerate often "so as to make things clear in one's mind." The paradox of living is so utter that experience is leveled off to a continuous tension by exaggerating the insignificant, somewhat as in the distortions of Dostoevski. Karl in Amerika cannot get off the boat; K. in The Castle cannot manage to telephone; Joseph in The Trial cannot speak with his clients at the bank. Each, like the animal in The Burrow, is isolated by his own crises until he resembles Kierkegaard's individual without connections or pretensions, and with all the terrible responsibilities of solitude. The insecurity of the Kafka hero is desperate, for he is without benefit of either the resignation of faith or the retribution of tragedy. No propitiation can be made. "Our generation is lost," the dog considers, "but it is more blameless than those earlier ones." In The Trial before Joseph dies, bestially, under the knife, he explains, "My innocence doesn't make the matter any simpler." And by the Old Law the Enemy will demolish the burrow and, presumably, destroy its helpless recluse.

The paradox within the Kafka tragedy, the sustained pity

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and fear, its half-ethical, half-religious directions, are phrased with rich variations in the aphorisms and reflections: "Our relation to our fellow-men is that of prayer, our relation to ourselves, that of effort." In the notes on himself Kafka admits that "he has no conception of freedom" (the occupant of the burrow similarly confesses, "I have reached the stage where I no longer wish to have certainty"). His wishes are not wishes "but only a vindication of nothingness, a justification of non-entity, a touch of animation which he wanted to lend to non-entity." It will be difficult, however, to claim Kafka for existentialism after one reads Reflection 104: "One simply cannot not live. In that very 'simply cannot' lies the insane power of faith; in that denial it embodies itself." Kafka can also implicate the paradox itself, as he does in The Silence of the Sirens, where Ulysses's artifice to evade his peril raises questions of the pride of will so ulterior that "the human understanding is beyond its depths."

Then after we have read the allegories and all these subtle propositions we return to the handful of brief stories and fables printed here—The Married Couple, My Neighbor, The Knock at the Manor Gate—as we shall return to the novels, for the astonishing fantastic comi-tragedy of anxieties; in them we hasten, fatigued, "in almost guiltless silence towards death in a world darkened by others." Under a suspension of probability and the exaggeration that clarifies we revisit the psychological landscapes where a chance knock at the castle gate beneath the glare of noonday brings one, inexplicably, to the sudden and gross examinations of that perpetual court—a stone cell with bare walls and iron rings, and "in the middle something that looked half a pallet, half an operation table." When the exemption from probability is complete and the absurd is reduced to matter-of-fact, we have those vignettes of the paradox seen vividly by an amateur who is never ready for any contingency but who notwithstanding takes it for granted. In The Married Couple, for example, the implausible becomes dramatic and the comic becomes pathos: "Every now and then he would suddenly and quite unexpectedly clap his hat on his head; he had been holding it on his knee until then, slowly pushing it up and down there. True, he took it off again immediately, as if he had made a blunder, but he had had it on his head nevertheless for a second or two, and besides he repeated this performance again and again every few minutes." The crazy, intense drama of A Common Confusion cannot be played in the animal allegories, for in them Kafka capitulates to the answers that steal round the questions. His anguished "little investigations" must be followed through the strange vocations of K., of Joseph, of Gregor, of the nameless agents of these plain fables.

The Kafka malaise, it has been argued, is a symptom of the *galuth* mind, the mind of the Diaspora. In this collection Kafka's dread is not alone that of the Jew, or his trembling that of the Christian. An original sin has been committed upon man and, he concludes, "The state in which we find ourselves is sinful, quite independent of guilt." "A cage," goes another Kafka aphorism, "went in search of a bird." From this tragedy of gigantic anxiety there is no catharsis, no purification by the New Law. The expulsion from paradise is final, and the Furies still pursue.

WYLIE SYPHER

Behind America's "Iron Curtain"

BETRAYAL IN THE PHILIPPINES. By Hernando Abaya. A. A. Wyn, $3.

MR. ABAYA has here presented the first uncensored account of events in the Philippines since Pearl Harbor, with particular emphasis on what has happened there since the liberation in 1944-45. He has presented a carefully documented, damning indictment of United States policy in the Philippines since the liberation. He has presented a picture of a Philippine Republic free in name only, completely subservient to American economic interests, of a colonial state with a fascist President who collaborated with the Japanese against the United States and was placed in power after the liberation not only with the approval of the United States but with our assistance. He has presented a picture of a people who suffered unbelievably during the war years in the name of democracy and who now see their hopes, their aspirations, their ideals being stolen from them by fascist collaborators who fought them during the war years as allies of the Japanese. He has presented a picture of a Filipino people who for the first time are becoming aware of the political and economic factors that have resulted in their oppression for so many years, of the birth of a genuine Filipino progressive movement that in the past election threatened for the first time the power of the oligarchy which has ruled the Philippines for forty years under the United States and for four hundred under Spain.

In his introduction to this book Harold Ickes refers to the American "iron curtain" which has kept from the American people the truth about the political and economic situation in the Philippines. Ickes, of course, is in a position to know the facts, since as Secretary of Interior he held the powers of the American High Commissioner from 1942 until the appointment of McNutt some months after the liberation in 1945. There can be no doubt that Mr. Abaya's assertions are true. The facts are so overwhelmingly damning that the situation can no longer be glossed over or ignored.

The book begins with the first acts of collaboration committed by the leading Filipinos just after Pearl Harbor and ends with the election of Manuel Roxas to the Presidency of the new Philippine Republic last April. The Roxas record is clearly and coldly exposed, as are the records of the other collaborators now in power. A history of the much-maligned peasant army, the Hukbalahap, gives the lie to the many charges which have been hurled against them. The part played by General MacArthur in clearing Roxas of collaboration, the highly questionable tactics of High Commissioner Paul McNutt in behalf of Roxas during the campaign, the characteristic indecisiveness of President Truman on the collaboration question are all revealed.

It must be stated in all fairness that the book is in spots not well written, particularly in the earlier chapters. Some of the material is not well organized; there are some minor inaccuracies of date. These are faults which could be serious if the book dealt with a less important subject. But the book is in many spots really fine reporting; the author's analysis of the crime of collaboration, for example, is particularly good.

Mr. Abaya has been a newspaperman for a number of

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years. He served the late President Quezon as confidential secretary before the war. He was a member of the Free Philippines guerrilla organization during the Japanese occupation. The picture he has presented I know to be a true and factual one. His book should be read by all Americans who are not aware of the existence of this American imperialist "iron curtain" in the Philippines or of what lies behind it. For those Americans who are less naive, or better informed, "Betrayal in the Philippines" is an excellent and absorbing sourcebook, in fact the only sourcebook.

Nor should it be thought from this that the issues presented are dead ones. They are still very much alive and quite explosive. Conditions can still be remedied. The maladorous Trade Act should be revised. American troops should be withdrawn. Mr. Abaya's book is not only factual; it is timely.

R. F. MILLON

A Scholarly History

A CRITICAL STUDY OF ENGLISH POETRY. By Herbert J. Grierson and J. C. Smith. Oxford University Press. $5.

THE Oxford editors of Donne's poems and "The Faerie Queene," works antithetically dominant in the chief age of England's poetry, would appear to be the right men for an attempt to survey in 600 pages the whole achievement from Anglo-Saxon verse to 1939; and their book, for which we must be grateful, is conscientious and instructive. That it stands quite up to its title or its subject is less clear. I propose to take its virtues for granted and confine the review to an examination of some defects.

Probably the authors wish, with their word "critical," to disclaim comparison with the much fuller narratives of Warton and Courthope. But the word is misleading. Apart from a warm and just appreciation of Spenser I observe no real attempt to modify received opinion anywhere but in the chapter on Crabbe, who receives as much discussion as Dryden and Arnold taken together. Crabbe is more vigorous certainly than his reputation, though a frightening bore in most of the endless works he preserved from the more endless works he wrote; "The Village" and "Sir Eustace Grey" will define his talent. He looks like a meager harvest from a fresh survey of the bulk of English verse. One might have expected more from critics with qualities adequate to an attempt like this. The general paucity of technical criticism and philosophical criticism suggests further that one reason Crabbe occupies, thinly, twenty pages is that it is easy to describe him at length without reference to technic or principles. With the immensely superior Herbert this is difficult, and he gets one page. His exquisite brother is missing altogether; a loss to which one is easily reconciled on realizing that if mentioned at all he would have had only a sentence, like Golding, Greville, and Churchill. These are poets of some moment. On Golding, Pound's serious and pardonably exaggerated judgment is that his "Metamorphoses" "form possibly the most beautiful book in our language" (long inaccessible, one-third of the work, or 5,000 lines, can be had now in the Everyman "Ovid"); Greville, whose stature is beginning to be recognized, figures impressively in both the sixteenth-and-seventeenth-century Oxford anthologies (the

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second being coedited by Professor Grierson); Charles Churchill was after Pope, Johnson, Swift his century's most gifted satirist. Merely to mention them as existing can hardly pass for "critical," nor will the authors' sole remark about Greville, that he "made poetry of statecraft," whatever that means. Now a history of this sort, short or long, lacking freshness may yet possess *authority*, in judicious reliance upon other critics—as a serviceable anthology might be assembled by a man who couldn't tell Purney from Pope. But equally through inattention and defective sympathy I am afraid the present work can lay small claim to authority.

It is damaging, for instance, that the authors are evidently unfamiliar with Yvor Winters's revaluation of sixteenth-century lyric (*Hound and Horn*, 1933, *Poetry*, 1939); so that Googe and Turbervile are absent as always, and Gascoigne is said to be "by no means the worst poet" in the period of which he is the striking glory. Less predictable is their scanting of two magnificent poets, Wyatt and Raleigh, who have had much serious attention in recent years. Only a stanza and line, also quoted by Legouis, are given from Wyatt; the author of "The Ocean to Cynthia" is huddled into six lines as "highly individual." Their chilly treatment of Dryden continues more or less through the eighteenth-century chapters until Cowper is reached, and it is imperfectly balanced by an extreme partiality for matters Scottish. The perfunctory character of the authors' sympathy with metaphysical poetry is astonishing, considering the debt that modern study of it owes to Professor Grierson. Whether dramatic poetry should have been included in a book this size is doubtful, but if included it ought to have been discussed. Thus the whole description of Chapman's verse, dramatic or non-dramatic, runs: "His full and heightened style, often full to bombast and heightened beyond comprehension, impedes his utterance; but when he gets his throat clear he can speak out loud and bold," a banal cento of Webster and Keats. The book is enthusiastic and best about Shakespeare and the nineteenth century, though it patronizes Hood ("No poet need be altogether ashamed of his work who . . .") and traduces in my opinion the poet of "Amours de Voyage" ("Clough had no lyric gift"). In a prefatory note the authors express some diffidence as to their capacity for dealing with post-Victorian verse. But since this diffidence has not affected their dogmatic, and fantastic, account of what has taken place since 1900, it must be said with emphasis that they simply do not know in the final chapters what they are talking about. One wonders why they ventured. A history faces ridicule that closes its roll of the English poets, some women aside, with the statement that "Mr. Rostrevor Hamilton, Mr. Frank Kendon, Mr. Laurence Whistler, to name no others, carry on the English tradition."

What audience was imagined for it I don't readily see. It seems not to be designed for reference (there is a useful bibliography, but the index is casual and notes rare, even when urgently needed); if so, it is generally inferior to Legouis and Cazamian, which has the advantages of size and prose reference besides a European perspective. For the serious student it is neither detailed enough nor full enough. Yet as a narrative for the general reader—that mysterious and probably non-existent person—it is not selective enough, and often dull. Not uniformly but in large part it has to be described also as diffuse, repetitious, uneven, superficial, and ill-written. This muddle is depressingly representative: "But to enjoy Pope's Satires you must to some extent be able to share Saintsbury's conviction that in poetry the form is everything, for even he has to admit a number of qualifications to the enjoyment if, like most of us, one is interested in the matter as well as the form." The authors' wit ("Mr. Spender wore his red with a difference. . . . Mr. Spender's heart bleeds . . .") can be as embarrassing as their diction ("these lovely pictures of the dear English landscape have not faded and will not fade") and their logic ("Dryden is the first English poet who lived mainly or wholly by his pen. No Elizabethan poet did so unless he was also a dramatist. . . . Dryden too had to live mainly by plays").

"Mr. Eliot can scarcely be counted the pioneer of English modernism. That honor may fairly be claimed by Miss Edith Sitwell." This is chronologically false as it is critically ridiculous. The crucial poem, "The Love Song of Alfred J. Prufrock" (so called twice here), was printed in June, 1915, the year Miss Sitwell's negligible first book came out, and Eliot has recently written, "I had kept my early poems (including "Prufrock") in my desk from 1911 to 1915"; his book appeared in 1917, Miss Sitwell's first characteristic book in 1918. So much for a point of scholarship that should not have come up. On page 546 occurs the following sentence: "The Imagists owed their name, we believe, to Mr. Ezra Pound; but we shall excuse ourselves from discussing that person, who was never to our knowledge a British national" —as if modern English verse were intelligible without Pound. So much for the ideals of scholarship. A demon of misquotation pursues the authors, twisting even Shakespeare (for examples pp. 120, 125, 164, 191); it is now known (1931), and the fact rescues his early verse from contempt, that Middleton was born in 1580 not "1570?"; Yeats has no poem, I believe, well-known or otherwise, called "Gyrations," but can a posthumous piece "The Gyres" be meant? "Bowles certainly revived the sonnet, wholly neglected since Milton's day"; but this is the second injustice to that eccentric Thomas Warton the younger, who not only published in 1777 sonnets still modestly current, but wrote a celebrated "History of English Poetry" which was better worth mentioning, surely, than his study of Spenser. It is strange that Professors Grierson and Smith have no word for their predecessors as predecessors, nor for the poets who planned histories without writing them. Pope and Gray are familiar among these, but the spectacular loss is as usual that of Coleridge, who left characteristic memoranda, first printed in 1933, "for a History of English Poetry, biographical, bibliographical, critical, and philosophical, in distinct Essays." It has still to be written.

JOHN BERRYMAN

The Nation *will print, in the next few weeks, reviews or articles by William Empson, Allen Tate, R. P. Blackmur, Wylie Sypher, Hans Reichenbach, Delmore Schwartz, Louise Bogan, Philip Rahv, Katharine Anne Porter, Kenneth Burke, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Dwight Macdonald, Jacques Barzun, and Morton Dauwen Zabel.*

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Records

B. H. HAGGIN

HERE, first of all, are the reactions of two children—four and a half and six and a half years old—to some of the children's records that are being issued in great numbers.

I need hardly say that they were delighted by "Tubby the Tuba," an inspired job of integration of music (George Kleinsinger) with story (Paul Tripp), and an excellent job of relaxed narration (Victor Jory), finished musical performance (Leon Barzin), and clear recording (Cosmo Records). The same authors' "Pee Wee the Piccolo," issued by Victor, and "Pancho Goes to a Fiesta," issued by Jupiter, I haven't yet played for the children.

They also loved the songs sung by Frank Luther in Decca's "Children's Corner." And I might add that Luther's pleasantly relaxed singing is something children like in his other Decca recordings; and that his informal room-sized narration makes the Decca recording of "Peter and the Wolf" better and preferable to the Victor recording with Richard Hale's declamation into the vast reverberant space of the empty concert hall. (Also—since I mention "Peter and the Wolf"—that Columbia's Stokowski performance and Victor's new Walt Disney version with its horrible narration by Sterling Holloway are things to avoid.)

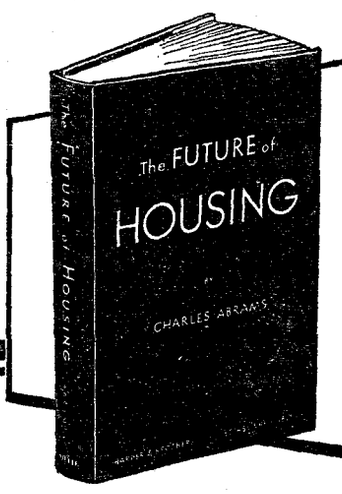
Columbia's "King Who Couldn't Dance" told by Gene Kelly turned out to be another favorite; and I expect the recently arrived Kelly recordings of "Peter Rabbit" and "The Little Red Hen" to have the same success. On the other hand Victor's "Little Black Sambo and the Twins" and "The Unsuccessful Elf" told by Paul Wing were listened to attentively but not asked for again.

Most recently, the first releases of the Young People's Record Club have made a great hit. Both children love the account of all the sounds a little dog heard on the way to the country and when he got there, on the record of "But Muffin Could Hear" for the pre-school-age group. And both love the songs on the record "Going West" for the school-age group. The bonus record of Haydn's "Toy Symphony" they listened to attentively but did not ask for again.

Columbia's recordings of the Mila Mack presentations of "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Cinderella" on the C. B. S. "Let's Pretend" program were frightening, and were not played again. As for Vox's "Mozart, His Story and His Music" and "Schubert, His Story and His Music"—with the bits of music that one hardly has begun to hear when they are interrupted by false anecdotes, with the rushed narration and musical performance and generally hectic atmosphere, and with the atrocious female voice that is heard in the Schubert volume—I don't consider them suitable for anyone, old or young.

That is all I have space for, on this subject, until next Christmas.

Recently a young student wrote me some interesting things about the record lending library at Princeton University. It is quite large—over 7,000 records; and "undergraduate interest is terrific, the circulation for the month of October approaching 3,500 records." Not only that, but through the listening which the library has made it possible for the students to do they have developed their taste remarkably: "the most popular works around 1940 were things like the Rachmaninov Second Concerto and the Ravel Bolero, whereas the recent favorites have been things like Beethoven's Ninth, Schubert's 'Schöne Müllerin,' and Mozart's Piano Concerto K. 595." One would suppose that all this would impress the high officials of the University; but actually my correspondent mentioned it in the course of informing me sadly that the library "had to close last



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week because of lack of funds. It has been subsisting on the generosity of one alumnus since its foundation in 1938"; and "the University is apparently unwilling to support it in any way." This was confirmed shortly afterward by a Princeton alumnus who had attended a music symposium at the University, where he had learned that the sum which this great and rich institution refused to spend to keep the library going was—believe it or not—$600.

Drama

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

MOSS HART'S "Christopher Blake" (Music Box Theater) concerns itself with the story of a twelve-year-old boy who is compelled to chose between a mother and a father in the process of getting a divorce. The eight scenes alternate between the courthouse itself and the inside of the boy's head, where elaborate phantasies act themselves out. Obviously, therefore, it suggests Mr. Hart's extravaganza, "Lady in the Dark," but it is actually a much more sinister phenomenon. Before the curtain had been up five minutes, I found myself puzzled by something at once familiar and strange, and before many more had passed I realized what it was. "Christopher Blake" is not really a play at all, but a class A motion picture—the very first I think ever produced on Broadway frankly for what it is.

The influence of the movies is, of course, an old story. Plays written and acted with an eye to Hollywood, as well as financed from there, are familiar enough. In the past, however, they have always pretended, at least, to be plays in the first instance and the assumption has always been that they would be "adapted" to the screen. But in "Christopher Blake" the Thing, as Mr. Shaw would say, Has Happened. Here is a movie transferred to the stage as directly as the movies once tried to transfer plays to celluloid. All the stigmata of the big-budget picture are there and the assembly of stigmata constitutes the whole.

That naturally implies many things—more, indeed, than could be analyzed in less than a volume—but it also implies one thing more important than all the others: a monstrous, deliberate disproportion between the means employed and the ends achieved. Since an A picture is technically distinguished from a B by nothing except cost, and since an anecdote which has been dramatized to the tune of $2,000,000 automatically becomes an epic, the effort is to find more and more elaborate ways of saying what could be said simply and of realizing in greater and greater physical detail what could be implied or suggested. Mr. Hart seems to have been the first to dare to undertake a play conceived in accordance with precisely these aesthetic principles, and the result is that little Christopher's dreams are Colossal in the real Hollywood way and are, indeed, dreams such as only a movie tycoon could afford to have. If, as in the first scene, for instance, young Christopher imagines that he is receiving national recognition for his infallible peace plan, then President Truman and Generals Eisenhower and MacArthur are actually there, represented by the most reasonable facsimiles which the biggest casting agency could dig up. But that is by no means all. The flashbulbs really flash, the movie cameras grind, and the mob is no trio of awkward supers but a real mob filling the stage like a subway car during the rush hour. And so it goes. This is such stuff as only Hollywood dreams are made on and anyone who doubts that the result is a genuine Special Epic Super-feature (marketed separately on a percentage basis) need only to look at the cost sheets to be convinced.

Even Shakespeare, as the Victorians discovered, can be smothered in scenery, but, like most A pictures, "Christopher Blake" is less than Shakespearian in fable, characterization, and language, and it can readily be shaken down to as neat a little collection of moral and dramatic clichés as was ever assembled by a harried script-writer for either the movies or the radio. By conscious intention, apparently, the court scenes are stripped as bare as the dream scenes are overstuffed, but the effect is only to create in the former the effect of Drama's other illegitimate sister, so that the whole is exactly what a man who had never seen a play on the stage (but was perfectly familiar with the soap opera as well as the cinema) would expect a theatrical performance to be like. In real life, Christopher's parents "discuss their problem" by alternating hysterical outbursts with moments of sweet reasonableness, and as the curtain goes down on one of their big scenes it is impossible not to hear in the mind's ear the announcer unctuously repeating the question, "Which will little Christopher choose?" before going into his spiel about pink pills or crispy cereals. In the past, Mr. Hart has known how to write shrewd, knowing satire That he has not entirely lost his gift is proved by one of the very few brief moments during which something genuine suddenly puts in an unexpected appearance; during, that is to say, the brief scene given to a typist from the lawyer's office who is delighted to meet a character from the story she has been chronicling in legal documents. But, nine-tenths of the time, Mr. Hart prefers to be merely elaborate.

Richard Tyler does give the title role a rather remarkable bravura performance, in the course of which he hams as expertly as any old stager, but quite so juicy a part is probably a doubtful boon to a beginning actor and, if he were ten times as good as he actually is, "Christopher Blake" would still be something to depress anyone really concerned with the future of the theater. As an institution, the stage has managed to survive until now because it has had a certain faith in itself. Once it accepts not only Hollywood money but Hollywood ideals as well, it is lost. Once it resigns itself to the necessarily clumsy imitations of Hollywood techniques and Hollywood effects, there will be no reason left why anyone should see a play budgeted at $200,000 when he could see a movie which cost $3,000,000. Two boards and a passion may be a bit too little for the best kind of theatrical performance. The machinery of "Christopher Blake" is far too much.

"Years Past," Ruth Gordon's life with *her* father now current at the Mansfield, is a pleasant enough little comedy probably destined to considerable popularity in spite of the fact that it is not exactly original. All the "nostalgic" touches are by now pretty familiar and the parallels with another very successful play are a bit uncomfortable. Suffice it to say that Gordon *père* was a manly, irascible man with a heart of gold and that the action concerns itself with the successful efforts of his wife to maneuver him around to the acceptance of a proposal which horrified him when he first heard it. He was a good deal less prosperous than father Day, and no one wanted him to be baptized, but his daughter did want to go on the stage and after much ado she did set out for New York. Fredric March and Florence Eldridge give sturdy performances. Patricia Kirkland exhibits considerable charm as the daughter.

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Letters to the Editors

Achievement vs. Ineptitude

Dear Sirs: Realizing the space limits of *The Nation*'s book reviews, it is still my opinion that G. R. Walker's review (November 16) of C. E. Ayres's "The Divine Right of Capital" overlooks the original contribution Ayres has made: a theory of economic inquiry reflecting value in terms of the demands of technology and scientific method (*cf.* his chapter on "The End: Achievement").

In January, 1939, Ayres wrote that our civilization has become a contrast of "achievement and ineptitude." By "achievement," he meant the products of scientific method; his own theory of value demonstrates this process by having successfully combined the inquiries of Veblen and Dewey (who had previously carved their theories out of the rough of other evolutionary studies). Ayres admits this of himself and of all others who invent things, whether the *res* be ideational or technological. Both are elements of the same process of making objective judgments based on factual knowledge. All human progress, then, has been in terms of evaluating objects in a matter-of-fact sequence resulting in values which are "real, certain, permanent, and progressive . . . the real achievements of mankind."

The trouble, though, Ayres relates, is that human nature has two sides——the other (ineptitude) being discernible in resistance to change, the fanciful, visionary, and mystical side of life. Such values are *relative,* often nihilistic—the essence of habits, customs, and the deeply ingrained mores of the community—the values derived from revelation and authority, the antithesis of scientific inquiry. These relative values (thus far in history) eventually succumb to scientific values, but only after long and bitter struggles, wars, or revolutions. Nevertheless, all calculable human achievement is the product of the "cumulative skill of hand and eye and brain." We don't achieve more rapidly because of our general failure to comprehend technological progress in such terms. In economics, the idea of full production is the total sum of the reality of freedom, but its application is inhibited by mystical conceptuologies concerning pecuniary capital. In law, the ideal is justice, but mystical ideas as to private property, the state, the family, etc., often resist logical analysis.

The development of technical equipment is a democratizing process, and it cannot be stopped unless we kill all the inventors; that no one desires to do, and the obdurate facts must be faced. Man's supreme scientific effort must then be directed toward the organization of his institutions in light of this technological continuum. Ours is a mass-production economy which is falling apart at the seams because it is still organized in terms of a totally outmoded, nonscientific, "natural"-rights Eighteenth Century philosophy concocted prior to the Industrial Revolution. Thus, the only possible way to save any sort of "free enterprise" is in terms of a limited capitalism based upon Twentieth Century philosophy à la Dewey and Ayres. Ayres's solution involves shuffling only a few blocks at the top of the institutional pile (increased higher-bracket income taxes devoted to complete social security); if he is not heeded, the whole pile comes tumbling down on our heads as in the days of Jericho. It is fervently hoped that advocates of "absolute capitalism" learn from Ayres in time.

DURWARD H. DYCHE

New York, November 11

Christmas in Seville

Dear Sirs: Have you ever seen Seville in December? It is a friendly, charming and beautiful city. Yes, in spite of the suffering of the people under the Franco dictatorship. Yes, in spite of the tension that exists when soldiers and Civil Guards line the streets, watching, watching. . . . It was 1945. The orange trees which grace the streets, the parks and the gardens were full of fruit. The flowers in the gardens of the old Alcazar were still in bloom. In the Cathedral, the Seises danced, sang and played the castanets before the High Altar in honor of the Immaculate Conception, in one of the most beautiful and ancient of Catholic rituals. It was a sublime ceremony in a sublime cathedral. In the streets, gorgeous looking girls passed by, appearing not to hear the *piropos* (flatteries) some of the young men made. "Your eyes are darker than Franco's future," I heard a young man say in a soft voice to a beautiful señorita.

I visited the American Consulate. "See those two men leaving the consul's office?" one of the clerks told me. "They are *guerrilleros.* They've been fighting in the Sierra Morena mountains since the end of the Spanish Civil War. They represent 24,000 men who are up in the mountains still fighting against Franco. They were selected to come here and hand the consul the guerrillas' Christmas greetings to the American people." I wondered how many Americans would ever receive these greetings. No publicity would be given to the incident except somebody's short dispatch to the State Department in Washington.

I followed the two *guerrilleros* in their shabby clothes and old *alpargatas.* They had sad, proud eyes and the indomitable spirit that so many Spaniards have. I walked up the Parque Maria Luisa which leads to the outskirts of the city. I said, "I am an American and I love freedom. I was told about your mission. Thank you. May you all have a *Felices Pascuas* too! Millions of Americans wish you the same. They have not forgotten you." The older of the two said, *"Y por que no hacen nada entonces?* (Why don't they do something then?). For us there can be no Merry Christmas as long as Franco is in power." I wanted to give them some hope, but I could not. During eight months in the Iberian Peninsula I had seen how we worked hand in glove with the British in keeping Franco in power. "I wish you luck." That is all I could say. As the two *guerrilleros* walked in the direction of Sierra Morena, I thought how the world had let them down and yet how full of the spirit of good will to men they still were.

With their spirit, they would have to win, in time.

ROBERT RENDUELES

Brooklyn, November 30

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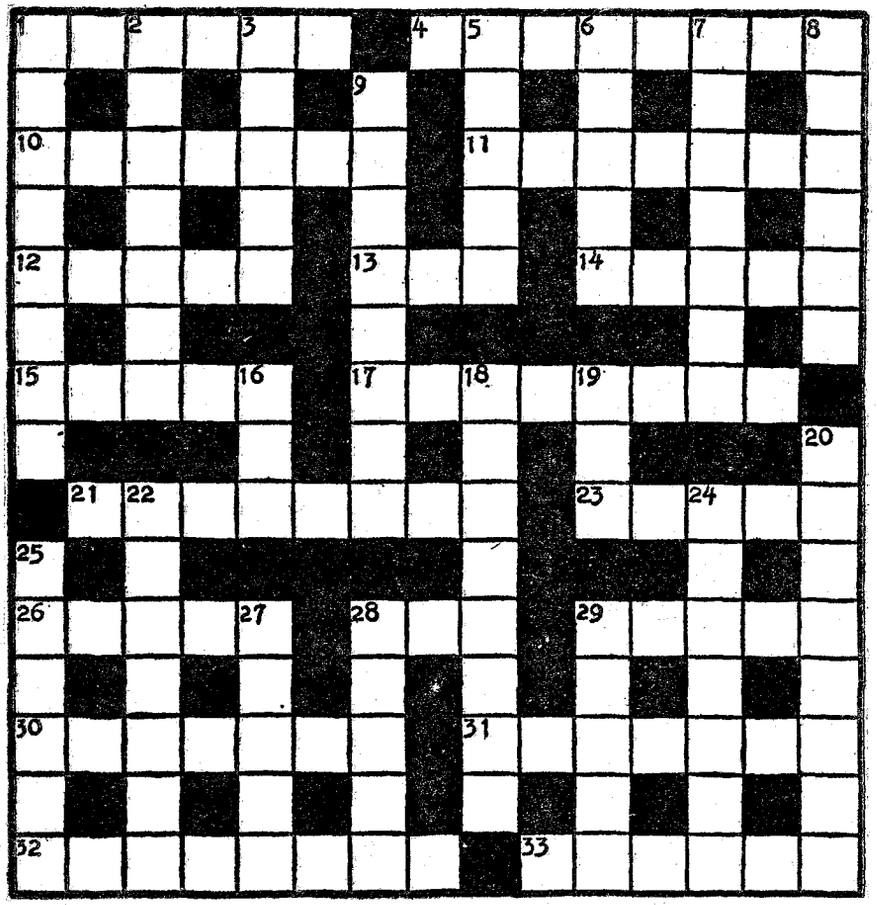
Crossword Puzzle No. 191

By JACK BARRETT



ACROSS

1 Operatic chauffeurs?
4 It's been the making of New Jersey
10 Make progress
11 Men rose for this American author
12 "Awake, my soul! stretch every -----, And press with vigor on"
13 A perversion of the truth
14 A proper name, yet a very common one
15 He'd adore to be a docker
17 Royal mail?
21 Sheets, pillow-slips, etc. (3 and 5)
23 Floral plate
26 Part of a peninsula in Europe
28 In heraldry, the fleur-de-lis
29 Trove is brought to light
30 A useful thing
31 Coal pit on a hill in Washington
32 Might describe a contest between two equally good teams of bell-ringers
33 Angelina's shorter sister

DOWN

1 Closely united, like Highlanders
2 A brown study
3 Yours affectionately, Ernest
5 Relation who is nice for the most part
6 A feminine, rather than a masculine, lock
7 In slits going the other way
8 The Mahatma
9 Expensive coat: but its owner has a good balance
16 Old cloth measure
18 A paragon? There's no such thing
19 Go
20 The little ships
22 The Artful Dodger was good at it
24 Thereat a dramatic change
25 Mounds conceal a man
27 Diana transforms herself into a water-nymph
28 "--- --, Macduff, And damned be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'" (3 and 2)
29 Modern English painter

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 190

ACROSS:—1 BRING UP; 5 RABBITS; 9 CHINA; 10 INK; 11 DELHI; 12 URNFUL; 15 SCOTCH; 16 SEA-COOK; 17 EYES; 19 WHIR; 21 FAIRWAY; 22 LAGS; 23 INNS; 25 STEELED; 27 CLASPS; 29 SUPINE; 33 EAGLE; 34 USK; 35 ELIDE; 36 SCYTHES; 37 POSTMAN.

DOWN:—1 BECAUSE; 2 ILION; 3 GRADUS; 4 PAIL; 5 RAKE; 6 BEDECK; 7 ISLET; 8 SLITHER; 13 LEVANTS; 14 SCORNED; 15 SOLACES; 18 EGG; 20 HEN; 22 LOCKERS; 24 SHEBEEN; 25 SPEECH; 26 DURESS; 28 ANGRY; 30 IDIOM; 31 MUGS; 32 SKIP.

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